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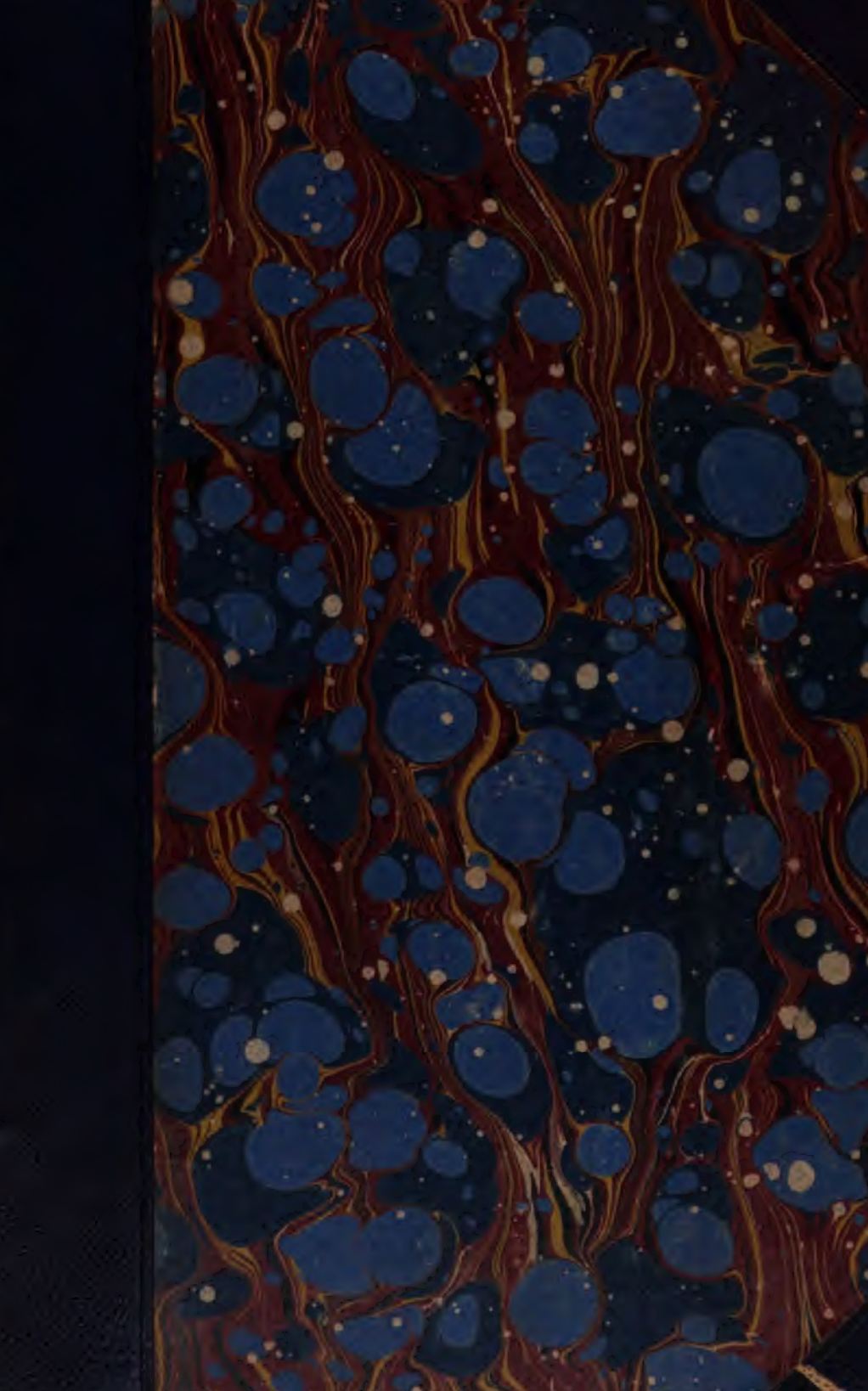

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SAINT PAULS.

A Monthly Magazine.

EDITED BY ANTHONY TROLLOPE.

ILLUSTRATED BY J. E. MILLAIS, R.A.

VOL. I.

OCTOBER 1867 TO MARCH 1868.

LONDON:
VIRTUE AND CO., CITY ROAD AND IVY LANE.
1868.

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SAINT PAULS.

October, 1867.

INTRODUCTION.

Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci.

It may perhaps be allowed to the Editor of a new magazine to address himself personally to his wished-for readers from the rostrum of his first page, and to say a few words on his own behalf and on that of his fellow-labourers, in justification of the enterprise which he and they are commencing.

He begs to assure such of the public as will kindly interest themselves in the matter, that the Saint Pauls Magazine is not established, on and from this present 1st of October, 1867, on any rooted and matured conviction that such a periodical is the great and pressing want of the age. He believes that the spirited proprietors of the work are actuated by a belief that the undertaking may be made to be successful and commercially profitable to themselves by a liberal expenditure of capital, and by zeal and care on their part. He thinks that the writers who are joined with himself in the work have undertaken their tasks with a double feeling,—that the labourer is worthy of his hire,—and that he will be found worthy, also, of praise if his work be well done. He is aware, also, that he will have some with him whose object it will be to find a vehicle for the expression of the ideas with which they are laden. For himself, he can say, that in becoming the Editor of a new magazine it is his object to work in his profession as a man of letters, successfully,—with credit to himself, if it may be possible,—and with some advantage, if that also may be possible, to those increasing thousands of readers whom the progress of education is producing. The Saint Pauls Magazine is not started because another special publication is needed to satisfy the requirements of the reading world, but because the requirements of the reading world demand that there shall be many such publications to satisfy its needs.

It would be pleasant here to fill a few pages with a history of the growth of periodical literature in England, were it not that it is now the writer's duty to confine himself to the announcement of this new

undertaking, rather than to speak of those which are old and still living, or those which have passed away. It may, however, be well to point to the fact that the Tatler and the Spectator, which were commenced, the one by Steele in 1709, and the other by Addison in 1711, were the earliest of a long series of publications, among which may be named the Gentleman's Magazine, the Rambler, the Monthly, the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews, and then the magazines which we know to-day, Blackwood's and Fraser's, and more recently the Cornhill and Macmillan's, with the vast crowd of existing competitors; till now in this year at which we have arrived, it is hardly too much to say that,—exclusive of the political and critical newspapers,—the monthly periodicals afford to the reading public the greatest part of the modern literature which it demands. The nature, of course, of these publications has been very various. There was, first, the short humorous essay which came out, alone, on a small sheet of paper; then the dry critical review, joined with occasional news of the day; then the great literary work of our august quarterlies, with which was soon joined the sharp political attack of the eager partisan;—after that the mixed pages of the monthly magazine, in which essays on all possible subjects found a place. After a while there came the serial novel, taking a place of honour among those essays,—taking, perhaps, the place of highest honour in the pages of the magazine;—and so has been formed that class of literature with which the public is now so intimately conversant, and of which the first number of a new series is to-day presented to it.

It is all but fruitless now to inquire whether such literary food as is conveyed to the world in these publications is as strengthening, as serviceable, and as wholesome as would be a diet of a stronger kind. They who look with regret at what is going on in the world of letters, and who express their dismay at the universal craving of the day for light literature, and especially for literature that shall be short, are perhaps a little apt to forget that the reading of magazines, extensive as it has become, has been added to, rather than has superseded the study of graver works. It is because reading has become the leisure relaxation of so many among us that the demand for such works as these has increased with such rapidity,—not because they among us who hitherto were studious have ceased now-a-days to love their studies. But this at any rate is certain,—that whether the reading of magazines and reviews be or be not as salutary as would be a closer attention to literature of a graver kind, the public will have what it demands, and it is the duty of those who provide for that demand to see that the article produced is as good of its kind as it can be made.

Those who are disposed to speak ill of the magazines of the day are apt to say that they are made up of novels and padding;—that they are bought chiefly for the sake of the novels which they contain, and that the other articles are written with the mere purpose of filling

up a certain number of pages, and are thrown in as a make-weight. They who hold this opinion can hardly have looked very closely at the work which the editors and writers of our magazines have produced to the world, either formerly, or even since the days in which a shilling was taken to be the fair pecuniary representative of a month's literature. We have hardly now living among us one or two whose names are great in literature,—we hardly have had living among us three or four for many years,—who have not added something to the periodical literature of the day. The padding of which many among us speak so lightly has been provided for us by such caterers as Sydney Smith, Wilson, Macaulay, Thomas Hood, Whewell, Carlyle, Thackeray, Tennyson, Mrs. Browning, Bulwer, Dickens, Froude, Lewes, Stanley, Tyndal, Huxley, Ruskin, Arnold, and a long list of others whose names will soon be not less honourably known than those which have been mentioned. None but they who have observed very clearly what has been going on can be aware how many subjects in art, in social life, in politics, in public conduct, in criticism, in law, in morals, in religion, and in science, have been discussed, ventilated, and turned into public property in the pages of magazines,—which never would have been so discussed, which could not possibly have reached so wide a public, had they who wrote upon them been too proud to descend into the arena of a monthly periodical. A novel will be padding with one reader, dissertations on Geist to a second, and inquiries into the utility and justice of trades' unions to a third. We cannot all assimilate the same food, and we are generally disposed to think but little of the dish which we do not ourselves relish. "Don't have any poetry," says one eager adviser. "You may put in what you like, so that you steer clear of politics," says another who is quite certain of the results of his own experience. "Confine yourself to novels and syllabubs. The world does not want to be taught wisdom by you," is the dictum of a third. "Get your padding cheap," says a fourth, "because no one ever reads it." I will take none of their counsels. If a poet will send us his poetry, it shall certainly be used. We will be political if we are anything. Novels we will have and syllabubs, but will not believe that our guests will be content with no other dishes at the banquet. And we certainly will willingly get no cheap padding, believing that that which we shall produce will be read if that which we produce be worth the reading.

There is certainly no settled conviction in the minds of any of us, proprietors, contributors, or editors, that a Saint Pauls Magazine is the one great want of the age, and that the creation of such a periodical is the last and greatest effort necessary to make the country glide successfully through the remaining years of the present century. But not the less have we all an intention and settled purpose of our own. Though we are thus modest in repudiating any intention of filling up a manifest gap, we are desirous of assuming an idiosyncrasy, of walk-

ing in a certain defined path, and of earning a character for special merits. Among our brethren who are still in their early infancy,—though of course they are all older than ourselves,—some have declared their purpose of tripping along ever upon the light fantastic toe, believing it to be their mission to amuse rather than to instruct; while others have marched forward,—one other at any rate has done so,—with the steady gait of self-conscious information, professing to be instructive and daring to be grave. Here we shall endeavour to unite the two, thinking that an Editor cannot do better than assume the motto which the present Editor has ventured to place at the head of this introductory notice. We hope to conciliate the graver sisters, but shall not attempt to do so by turning up our noses at any laughter-loving Muse.

It has been already said that the SAINT PAULS, if it be anything, will be political. There has of late apparently come up an idea that as politics are by consent banished from certain meetings,—committee-rooms, dinner-parties, and other gatherings of men which are assembled for purposes especially non-political,—therefore should the subject also be banished from the pages of all periodical literature which is not produced with the express and primary object of disseminating political feelings,—as is the case with newspapers. It has been considered that a point has been gained with the public when the manager of a magazine or review has been able to declare that politics would be eschewed. The Editor here, who is attempting to describe and not to puff the magazine which he hopes to make acceptable to a portion of the public, by no means intends to censure those of his brethren who have been actuated by this idea. He simply states that such is not his idea in reference to this new venture. He and his friends who will work with him intend to be political,—thinking that of all the studies to which men and women can attach themselves, that of politics is the first and the finest,—and remembering also that in former days politics were not avoided by those periodical publications which found most favour in the estimation of the public.

It would be difficult in these days for any Editor to define with accuracy the line of politics which those who work with him intend to take. To declare oneself to be a Reformer at the moment in which household suffrage has been just carried by the Government of Lord Derby, would indeed be to say nothing. Who is there that will say that he is not a Reformer? If there be such a one, he must be some Troglodyte, dwelling in caves, away from the haunts of men. And who is there also that does not feel himself to be a Conservative while the perils hang over us of our untried household suffrage? The old denominations must give place to new before a magazine or even a man can define his politics by a name. Either the one or the other may, indeed, still support a cause, and belong to a party in supporting it. Unless this be done, we do not understand how the study of politics can be made subservient to the welfare of the country. And we who are

engaged in this new enterprise think that the good old Liberal cause still needs support; and we think also that, in spite of late disruptions, a party will exist in the House of Commons, as well as out of it, to whom that cause is dear and who will bind themselves together for its maintenance. Perhaps after saying so much an Editor need hardly declare that the cause to be supported here will be the free government of the country by that side in the House of Commons which in truth represents the majority of the constituencies. It would seem that such a state of things must necessarily be the result of our Constitution as it stands; but skill and resolution on the one side, with some awkwardness, and, alas! also, with some want of faith on the other, have so turned things round of late, that men are disposed to think that skill is better than faith, and that resolution atones for want of principle more effectually than steadfast honesty can atone for awkwardness. This magazine, dear reader, is not established with any high idea that it can set these things right if they be wrong. But as the widow's mite was accepted,—so also may a little word in good season, if it be spoken in the right spirit.

It needs hardly to be declared in these introductory remarks that it is not our purpose to endeavour to entertain our readers without the assistance of novels. As there are many critics of the literature of the day who declare that magazines are almost worthless because they are filled with padding, so are there others who are equally opposed to them, because none of them,—we believe not one,—is now to be found unpolluted by the silly enthusiasm of the romancer. The Editor, however, who would cater successfully for the public, whatever may be his own taste and judgment in such matters, must provide that for his readers which his readers demand and will certainly obtain, whether he provide it, or whether others do so. It may be boldly asserted that no magazine could live at present that refused to regale its friends from month to month with at least one serial tale, and that the magazine which trusts to two such works will fare better than its neighbour which trusts only to one. The preaching of the day is done by the novelist, and the lessons which he teaches are those to which men and women will listen. Such was not the case fifty years ago, when Scott, though still unknown, was in his prime;—it was not the case thirty years ago, when Bulwer and Disraeli and James and Ward had already become popular as masters of fiction, and when Dickens was commencing his career. Novels were indeed read, but were not a necessity in every household as they are now. Nor can any one say that the novelist will still be the preacher of the day when thirty years more shall have passed over us. The poet may then be in the ascendant,—or more probably the writer of the scientific essay; or it may be that the bookseller of the day will find a volume of sermons from the pen of some eloquent divine to be the stock that moves itself most quickly on his shelves. Such has been

the case, and may be the case again. In the meantime, the Editor of the magazine of to-day must provide for the readers of the day that class of literary food which they require.

It is not probable that this present Editor should feel himself called upon to quarrel with the public taste in this respect. It has been his humble, but not unpleasant task, as a man of letters, to sing, in prose, long love-ditties for his readers, and he has sung them till the singing of them has become a second nature to him. He has now put together another, which he will warble forth from month to month,—a ditty not indeed composed wholly of love-strains; a slight story, in which he has attempted to describe how love and ambition between them may cause the heart of a man to vacillate and make his conduct unsteady. His hero is not very heroic, and his readers, should he be happy enough to find them, will be lifted into no heaven of admiration or of wrath by the virtues or by the vices of their new acquaintances.

But the Editor of the SAINT PAULS, should he fail with this slight and oft-touched string of his own, has another cord to his bow with which he thinks that he will not fail. He has called a lady to his aid; and finding what his friend has done for him, he thinks that he may with confidence invite those who may take up the first number of this new magazine to read on and learn how in the small French town of D—— "All,"—among young and old,—was done "For Greed,"—how all was done for greed, and naught was done for love. If there be those who wish to learn how our neighbours live, —not in their bright capital which most of us know, not in that neighbouring province of Normandy which has lately been brought so pleasantly close to us by another lady novelist,—but down, far away from Paris, in a little town and its neighbouring communes; how life goes on among their poor gentry and rising men of local importance, the Editor will confidently invite those who are thus curious to read the story which he now offers to them.

If a poet will send us his poetry, it shall certainly be used. Perhaps the most difficult task which falls on the shoulders of the manager of a magazine is the selection and rejection of poetry. Very much is written which is good, so good that it cannot be put aside with an assured conviction that the writer has altogether lost his way in straying into rhymes and measures,—but which yet is not good enough to attract attention and to make a reader feel that here, in these very lines, is something with which it is worth his while to load his memory. As of all classes of literature poetry is the highest, and therefore the most enticing, so is it, as a matter of course, the most difficult. And it has in its composition this special danger and difficulty, that the young poet becomes enamoured of the sound and melody of his own lines, and cannot judge of them with that severity against himself which is within the compass of the writer of prose. He dwells on the lineaments of his soft-flowing verse till he loves

them as the mother loves the face of her baby. But the baby, though not amiss as a baby, may have no claim to be shown as a paragon; and the poet, though he may have succeeded in putting good thought into faultless verse, may have missed, and, alas! so often does miss, that power of expression which will enable others to enjoy his music with him. If the young would-be poet would look down upon that Golgotha into which are thrown the unpublished attempts of poetical aspirants, he would surely lose his courage and hang up his harp! The thing is to be done. Success is to be won. But as the honour is great,—so is the difficulty in winning it great also! The Editor will here only say that if any poet who has already won his spurs will come, he shall be received as such a knight deserves; and that when aspirants come for knightly fame,—as come they will,—they shall twang their strings and tune their pipes and try their unfledged flights to attentive ears.

One other statement in regard to the matter proposed to be introduced into the pages of this magazine the Editor will make. It is not intended that this magazine shall be a vehicle for literary criticism. It is probable that now and again some special work may be made the basis on which a contributor may found the matter of his own contribution,—after the fashion of some of the greatest of our modern English essayists; but in doing so the object will be to discuss the subject rather than the book. The work of literary criticism is in itself so great, so difficult, of importance so paramount, that it would seem to require,—if it is to be worth anything,—the undivided attention not only of an editor but of all his staff. It is easy enough to select a book here because it may be quickly read, and there because it is an easy mark for ridicule or for friendly praise; but such work can do no good to literature, and can hardly benefit either the writer of it or the reader. It may serve, or it may injure, the bookseller, and through the bookseller the author of the book criticised;—but to do either such service or such injury will not be within the scope of the present undertaking.

Of other subjects fitting for the pages of a magazine, who can give a list, or set a term to them? What matter may not be discussed with profit and delight if the mind of the writer be full and his hand be light? No human body, no human mind, can indeed be sustained by padding. But let us change only one letter, and we have a useful, farinaceous, savoury, and solid food before us, of which men and women with good digestions and strong appetites most frequently delight to partake. It shall be our effort here to see that our literary pudding be not often reduced to the quality of literary padding, either by badness of the material or by fault in the cooking.

The Editor now bows thrice to his audience, and retires behind his curtain, not purposing to intrude himself again in his own person before the public.

"THE LEAP IN THE DARK."

By a strange inversion of the usual order of things, the probable effects of the Reform Bill of 1867 upon the relation of political parties and the future legislation of the country, were scarcely discussed till the Bill was on the point of passing into a law of the realm. The very statesmen who were its authors reserved their manifesto till the end, and did not publish their own estimate of the ultimate results of the measure which they proposed, until they were able to count with confidence on its acceptance by Parliament and the country. Nor did this reticence on their part operate at all to their disadvantage. Compelled as they were to rely on Radical as well as Conservative support, they naturally concluded that the more reasons they put forward, the more likely they were to incur the risk of alienating a certain number of votes; while, on the other hand, they appear to have been justified in assuming that Parliament was, above all things, determined that some Reform Bill must be passed, and that they would accordingly be held responsible rather for success or failure in carrying a bill of some kind, than for the results of the measure upon the country, when carried. "Wanted—a Reform Bill," was to be the motto for the session and for the leaders of parties. Any elaborate examination into the probable results of the only bill considered possible would have been out of place at a time when the contingency of a break-down in carrying some Reform Bill during the session was considered a heavier risk than any mistaken estimate of the magnitude and scope of the Bill itself. But notwithstanding the anxiety shown on all sides, that under no circumstances should be lost the favourable chance of settling the question, we may be permitted to doubt whether, if Lord Derby had assured his own friends and followers in the beginning of the session instead of at its close, that the measure which was to cost them such heavy sacrifices was to him, its responsible, if not its actual author, a "leap in the dark," he would have found it equally easy to command their loyal acquiescence. On the other hand, it would manifestly have been equally inexpedient for Mr. Disraeli to have revealed prematurely his latest political discovery,—first announced by him in Merchant Taylors' Hall,—of the Conservative stratum which he believes is to be found in the parliamentary boroughs, if you only dig down low enough; or if, before victory was secured, he had unfolded his theories of the termination of liberal monopoly, and the probability of Tory ascendancy, which he frankly laid before the guests of the Lord Mayor at the banquet given at the close of the session to

her Majesty's Ministers in the Egyptian Hall. It was impossible to parade the Tory character of the Bill when it was being offered to the Liberals as worthy of their acceptance, and as more thoroughgoing than any previous bill proposed by their own leaders. In the House of Commons the primary motive for introducing and carrying the measure was avowed to be political necessity. The Ministers declared their readiness to leave the matter in the hands of the House, and to substitute parliamentary impatience for ministerial responsibilty as the motive power for carrying the Bill.

No problem, we should think, is likely to prove more puzzling to future historians than how to arrive at a just estimate of the nature and extent of that outward pressure which induced the Conservative leaders to introduce household rating suffrage into our representative system. Opinions apparently the very opposite were expressed by the same set of men. On the one hand, it was declared that the bulk of the country was at least as indifferent to parliamentary reform as the House of Commons itself. On the other hand, it was stated as an indisputable fact that the settlement of the question was an absolute political necessity. It is true that the interval of a few months and the change of government materially modified the relative degree of certainty with which these two opinions were affirmed. The indifference of the country has been less strenuously maintained this year. The necessity for reform was scarcely admitted in 1866. Last year the assertion of an opinion that Lord Palmerston, if he had lived, would have deferred parliamentary reform for ten years, was received with a certain amount of cheering in the House of Commons. This year there was not a score of members who ventured to deny not only the expediency of an ultimate settlement, but the urgent necessity for an immediate measure. Indeed, the fact that such a necessity was universally recognised, was openly avowed by the Conservative leaders as the justification of the course which they took. Was it true, then, that the country had been converted? Was it true, in any sense, that the indifference of the bulk of the public had yielded to reforming zeal, and that the governing classes finally sympathised with that small knot of politicians who really desired reform for the sake of the political and legislative advantages which they believed an amendment of our representative system would bring about? We must candidly admit that we doubt whether such a conversion has as yet taken place. We admit the existence of a vast amount of apathy; but it is, nevertheless, true that the Reform Bill was forced upon the Government. Those who appealed to the verdicts of present constituencies in support of the allegation that "the country" was indifferent to reform, failed to distinguish between the enfranchised country and the unenfranchised country. It was not unnatural that the enfranchised classes should be indifferent to changes which lessened their power,

but it was no answer to the advocates of the unenfranchised class to tell them that the country, as represented by existing electors, showed no intense desire for such a change. Apathy, and even reluctance, on the part of those in whom the government of the country has been vested up till now, formed no argument against the necessity or the expediency of the changes demanded by those who wished the elective body to be increased, either simply for the sake of those without the pale of the constitution or for the sake of the general public weal.

With regard to the degree of general interest felt in the subject by the working classes themselves, we doubt whether it will ever be possible to settle the controversy to the satisfaction of both sides. That the artisans in the great centres of population, especially in the West Riding and in Lancashire, have decided political interests, and claimed the suffrage with sincerity and energy, will, we suppose, be generally conceded. But as to the remainder of the country, views have been expressed so widely divergent, that it is difficult for any one to speak with absolute certainty; and if we were to declare it as our opinion that the working classes, in their broadest sense, showed, throughout the country, a fierce determination to secure electoral rights, we should be prepared to find our views stoutly contested. However, the great towns were clearly in earnest, and they may well claim to have been successful in carrying the conviction home to the minds both of sincere Conservatives and of the larger class of careless Gallios, that it was time to settle the question on which they had set their hearts. But by what means did they succeed; and succeed within so short a time? By argument? They have not even yet succeeded in convincing Lord Derby himself that the enlargement of the electoral laws is likely to lead to improved legislation. By threats of physical force? Their numerical demonstrations have throughout been depreciated by public opinion. By the inherent justice of their claims? Their claims were no less just last year than they are now. We believe the simple fact to be that they succeeded by their importunity. The reform question blocked the path of legislation. It delayed commercial and sanitary improvements, and it absorbed too much time. It diverted parliamentary attention from the Bankruptcy Bill, from railway legislation, from municipal reform, from the regulation of the import of foreign cattle, from a hundred measures coming home to the practical good sense of the English people. Parliament could not set to work while this incubus was upon it. It must be removed at any cost. Add to this common-sense view of the outer public, the special difficulties which the reform question brought to politicians of every hue, and the desire on all sides to extricate Parliament from the dead-lock to which, at least in respect of government by party, it had been brought by this most troublesome of all political questions, and we discover the forces which carried the Reform Bill of 1867.

There is something very remarkable in this indifference to future political consequences and this universal desire for political quiet at any cost, which have converted the ardent opponents or cold detractors of Reform into friends and advocates. It is important, we think, to look the fact full in the face. It has been patent enough. Public opinion, in the sense in which the word is so often used, the conversation of men whom one meets in the streets every day, the general current of thought in extra-political circles which exercises so large an amount of invisible and intangible influence on the course of events, public opinion in this sense of the word has occupied itself very moderately with the great issues which were being played out at St. Stephen's. To the public at large the game seemed interminably long and dull. The waste of time seemed almost criminal. What does it matter whether half a million of compound householders are enfranchised or not? How can sensible men quibble about such trifles when half the country is clamouring for railway reform, and are wearied of that dreary business of tinkering at our Constitution? Mr. Beales and the League created a little uneasiness because a gathering in Hyde Park was a visible and disagreeable fact; but the compound householder was an imaginary creature, and we doubt whether a single person slept one wink less for a single night because one evening in May, during the dinner-hour of the House of Commons, Mr. Disraeli blandly admitted as many of these imaginary personages to political power as there are at present borough electors in England and Wales. A change was being made in Parliament by which such a transfer of power was accomplished, as, we believe, was never made in any country, except under pressure of a revolution. But the transfer itself caused infinitely less commotion among the general public, whose fate and fortunes are henceforth to be entrusted to a new class, than would have been caused by any circumstances tending to delay the settlement, and to embarrass the progress of the Bill.

The whole question of rating, for instance, by which the Conservative party set such store,—and which was considered to be one of the main bulwarks of the new Constitution before Mr. Disraeli had announced his discovery that the lowest depths of society were conspicuously Conservative, and would therefore be the best possible bulwark themselves,—was, if we are not mistaken, viewed with profound indifference by the outer public. It was one of the dull minutiæ of the Bill, which "no fellow could understand." As to the House of Commons itself, it appears that, of all parts of the Bill, it devoted most attention to those connected with the expenses attending elections. The "lodger" was admitted to political power with infinitely less discussion than was devoted to the question of the conveyance of voters to the poll, and more hours were spent in disqualifying election agents as voters than in determining the figure to which the occupying

franchise in counties should be reduced. The discussion of the larger principles was out of place in an assembly which had resolved to pass a bill, and to accept every proposal on which the Ministry might choose to stake its existence. The Government and the House appeared both to have made up their minds that three things, at all events, should not be permitted to occur. No change of Government should take place; a dissolution was to be out of the question; and the Bill was in no case to be lost. The debates were accordingly reduced to a game of "brag." Whoever could brag best was sure to win, and the one statesman who played in silence, and suffered no one to look into his cards, was easily able to outmanœuvre the House, which was obliged to consult aloud, and could not conceal its hand. If the public had been deeply interested, not only in the settlement of Reform, but in the nature of the settlement; if every stage in the process of a vast transfer of power had been watched with intense anxiety; if the belief had been entertained that the future fortunes of England, its power, its character, its prosperity, were at stake; if it had been felt that many of those great questions on which the social fabric rests, which, far from interesting only the philosopher or the visionary, are of the greatest practical interest to all of us,—questions such as the relations of labour to capital, and the extent of Government interference with individual liberty,—if it had been believed that questions such as these might be re-opened under the new régime; that battles, long ago fought and won, might have to be fought over again under new conditions;—we should have heard less of the cry for an immediate settlement at any cost and of the duty of compromise, and more of the paramount urgency of weighing, with the utmost deliberation, every step to be taken in an irrevocable course. But the belief did not exist, and does not exist. "Thank God! that troublesome question is settled," was the dominant ejaculation, when a weary Parliament and a bored public exchanged congratulations on the Bill being brought safely into port.

Can this feeling of relief and satisfaction spring from any source but one? Is it not clear that it bears witness to the existence of a conviction, on the part of the classes who have hitherto governed England, and have taken care, to say the least, not to govern in a manner hostile to their own interests, that parliamentary reform, far from being a matter of life and death, is not likely to be followed by any great changes of policy of a nature to affect their interests, their comforts, or even their practical supremacy?

The belief must be general, either that a parliament elected by the new constituency will be very like all previous parliaments, or that even if the new parliament should be different, the position of the country will remain in essential respects unchanged. The apathy shown by the public at large to the creation of a million electors belonging to the poorer classes, an enfranchisement which causes existing electors to be

entirely outnumbered at the poll, is the greatest compliment which could be paid by the upper classes to their poorer fellow-countrymen. It exhibits their faith in the deep-rooted stability of our institutions, and their belief that all Englishmen are very much alike. The practical side of English politics has never been shown in more striking colours. Logically, theoretically, à priori, the Reform Bill is nothing less than a revolution. Practically and actually, the vast majority of Englishmen have shown that they believe it to be a slight modification of our representative system which it was politic to make, in order to satisfy somewhat importunate demands, but which was scarcely worth all the fuss that a set of professional politicians chose to make about the matter.

Possibly the issues at stake in the Reform Bill would have appeared larger to the general public, if great questions, vitally affecting the foundations of our national prosperity or disturbing the general current of national prejudices, had been occupying Parliament during late years. But it has not been so, For many years,—we might almost say since the passing of the corn laws, or, at all events, since the completion of the free-trade work,—no great issues have been before the House. The course of legislation has been smooth. Many legislative improvements have been made or attempted. Many bills have been passed which have interested the public and been conducive to the national welfare. But we have witnessed a long cessation from those great internal controversies which excite the country and bring home to the public the conviction that on Parliament depends its weal or woe. Parliament has of late been regarded as a useful and convenient machine for remedying irritating grievances, removing nuisances, and, during the last year or two, as a body to whom the public might fairly look for some constructive legislation, and here and there for control and supervision in matters till quite lately regarded as beyond the scope of Government interference. The tendency towards a demand for more central and drastic action by Parliament has been very marked of late. But what it concerns us here to bear in mind is this, that for years past far more sins of omission have been laid at the door of Parliament than sins of commission. It has been more frequently accused of insufficient and sometimes irregular work than of attempting too much. The English public knows absolutely nothing of the tyranny of a legislative assembly; and though some classes have, in the public interest, been occasionally interfered with more than they liked, such grievances have seldom been serious or general. "Compulsory" legislation has thus far been confined within the narrowest limits, and there are few enactments in our Statute Book which, like the Factory Acts, distinctly set limits to the free action of individuals. The reluctance of Parliament to pass compulsory measures, though at this moment decidedly on the wane, has hitherto been extreme, and explains, if we are not mistaken, in a great degree the manner in which the House of Commons

is regarded by the immense body of the non-political public. They do not realise what it is to be afraid of parliamentary action. If the question were put to them, they would admit the enormous powers for good or for evil in the hands of those who make the laws; but they do not put the question to themselves, and above all do not realise the fact that their prosperity, their comfort, their liberty of action, their means of livelihood, ay, even their family relations, are in the hands of that body which, by our constitution, wields supreme power in every department of life. "The omnipotence of Parliament" is to most of us simply a phrase. By long habit we have acquired the conviction that that omnipotence will only be exercised within very contracted limits.

It has been said, even by men who, like Mr. Lowe, have probed such questions to the bottom, and have not failed to consider the full effects of any changes in the constitution of Parliament, that the main function of the House of Commons is to raise a revenue and spend it, to levy taxes and to fix the Budget. There was a time, when the discussion of principles was not considered to be entirely out of place in reform debates, in which a vicious argument was founded on this supposed chief function of Parliament. If the main business of Parliament, it was contended, is to fix the amount of national expenditure, and to regulate the distribution of national burdens, surely the first thing to which we have to look is to make sure that political power shall stand in some relation to tax-paying. The old theory that representation must accompany taxation was expanded to mean that the scale of representation ought to be determined by the scale of taxation, and that those who paid little ought not to be allowed to outnumber in the polling book those who paid much. If taxation were indeed the chief function of the House of Commons, there would have been some weight in the argument, though even then it would require to be modified in a hundred ways. But it cannot be admitted that even the vast importance of financial questions outweighs other functions and powers of the legislature. The House of Commons has hitherto chiefly made its power tangibly felt by its financial work. In this respect its proceedings have certainly been watched with universal interest, though it has not been held so strictly responsible for lavish expenditure as might be natural in this practical country. And moreover the extraordinary buoyancy of the revenue, and the increasing capacity of the country to bear the heavy burdens which have been imposed upon it, have, even in this respect, somewhat blunted the sensitiveness of the public as to the doings of Parliament. Any changes in the incidence of taxation do excite attention and interest, but for some years the question has been what taxes should be taken off, rather than what should be imposed.

Thus, even in those financial questions which more than any others

bring home to us the powers of Parliament, circumstances have conspired to diminish the general sense of the vital importance to be attached to every trait in the character of the tax-imposing assembly. But we are concerned to remind our readers that the view is incorrect which assumes financial matters to be the most engrossing or important of all parliamentary questions. Indeed, this appears to us to be one of the fallacies which, like the apathy at present so generally shown in many circles on political subjects, has sprung from the modest proportion of the work to which Parliament has of late years, with much approval on the part of political economists, and some approval on the part of the public, thought fit to limit its endeavours. The doctrine of "laissez-faire" had become incorporated with our principles and adopted in our practice, and a Parliament which could be relied on to carry this doctrine to an extreme, excited little apprehension on the part of those who, contented with the lot of the classes to which they belonged, were perfectly ready and anxious to leave what they call "well" alone, and were more ready to forgive the comparative sluggishness of the intermittent efforts made by legislators in carrying out minor improvements, than to countenance any demands inviting Parliament to undertake a larger or more organic work. In short, financial prosperity relieving the country for a course of years from the imposition of new burdens; the absence of exciting political questions; the strict adherence of Parliament, whenever it was feasible, to the doctrine of "laissez-faire," securing as far as possible that immunity from State interference which is so agreable to those who are in a condition to be satisfied with things as they are; the modest character of recent legislation, and the little ambition shown by all parties to increase its dimensions,—all have tended to produce in the minds of a large portion of the public that listlessness as to politics proper, and that indifferentism as regards organic changes in our Constitution, which have enabled Lord Derby to take his leap in the dark amidst the impatient cries of the bystanders that he should leap at once, and be sure to jump to the bottom, lest the business-like and quiet course of legislation should be disturbed too long or too often by the performance of such acrobatic pranks.

We have assumed the Reform Bill to have been carried, apart from mere political influences, by the just importunity of a certain portion of the community acting upon the desire for a settlement and by the listlessness of the remainder; a desire for a settlement rendered possible by the half-unconscious feeling that Englishmen, take them where you will, are very much alike, and listlessness produced by the immunity so long enjoyed from any chafing caused by parliamentary interference.

We have dwelt particularly on this latter point on account of the great importance of its bearing upon the future. Who will prove to have been right in their estimate of the results of the Bill which all

desired to pass? Sincere reformers, who believe that a reformed Parliament will be stronger than former Parliaments, more useful, more courageous, more able to apprehend and appreciate the great problems of the day, and more inclined to grapple with them, when apprehended; or the "careless Gallio" school, which cares for none of these things, and neither desires nor expects change, which treats Reform as "much ado about nothing," and anticipates neither dangers nor advantages from what has been done; or the new school of Conservative democracy, which believes in a Conservative residuum, and looks to the maintenance of the Constitution from the union of the top with the bottom against the middle?

This latter doctrine has hitherto been developed only in shadowy outlines. It is of a somewhat delicate nature, and was, as we have before pointed out, not produced till very lately, nor did it seem adapted for the atmosphere of the House of Commons. We will not be so uncharitable as to believe that the theory is at bottom a very coarse one, and that it means neither more nor less than that wealth and rank will be able to cajole and coerce poverty and ignorance, and that householders between ten and six pounds may be presumed to be awkwardly intelligent and independent, while those below the six pound line will be found still to entertain traditional reverence for "their betters," and for the various influences which "their betters" know how to exercise for their inferiors' good. The theory must involve something more. It must mean that the instincts or the ideas of the mass of new electors are presumably Conservative, and that their influence will be thrown into the Conservative scale in the future struggles between parties.

At this moment, however, it is difficult to guess what will be the Conservative programme of the future, for which the support of the new electors is to be invited and obtained. Amongst the many difficult problems which the events of the late session place before us, none are more difficult than how to re-arrange in our minds the relation of political parties, and the questions which are likely to divide them. Some indications have, indeed, been given. Lord Russell, in his letter to the Working Men's Association, declining their invitation to the Crystal Palace banquet, at least put forward a positive programme, naming one or two essential and desirable measures. On the other hand, Mr. Disraeli, in his speech at the Mansion House,—to which we have already referred,—put forward a kind of negative programme, to which the public turned in vain for any further light on the subject of the Conservatism of the future. Everything was stated in negatives. "What is the Tory party," he exclaimed, "unless it represents national feeling? If it do not represent national feeling, Toryism is nothing. It does not depend upon hereditary coteries of exclusive nobles; it does not attempt power by attracting to itself the spurious force which may accidentally arise from advocating cosmopolitan prin-

ciples or talking cosmopolitan jargon. The Tory party is nothing unless it represent and uphold the institutions of the country. For what are the institutions of the country? They are entirely, and ought to be entirely, as I am glad to see they are likely to be in practice, the embodiment of the national necessities, and the only security for popular privileges." We search in vain amidst these striking sentences for anything like a distinctive feature of the new Democratic Conservatism. That the "institutions of our country ought to be upheld so long as they are the embodiment of the national necessities," will be admitted by Radicals as well as Conservatives. The phrase is excellently defined. But the controversy will scarcely be removed one stage. It will be asked whether they do embody the national necessities, or not; and as to the character of these national necessities, no word of explanation is vouchsafed. Again, "Toryism is nothing unless it represents the national feeling." In that every one will be agreed. We assent most cordially to the proposition; but it leads as easily to the inference that in fact Toryism is nothing because it does not represent national feeling, as to the contrary, that Toryism is everything because it does so represent it. The only gleam of light which we can obtain from the remarkable series of negative propositions which we have ventured to quote, is, that Toryism spurns the advocacy of cosmopolitan principles, and the use of cosmopolitan jargon. It is not easy to define, even to oneself, what the epigrammatic orator had in his mind when he made use of these words. What wing of the Liberal party, in or out of the House of Commons, was to be satirised by the phrase, or on what Conservative instincts was this disclaimer to act? What spurious force has been gained of late by the Liberals from talking cosmopolitan jargon,—jargon, we must presume, repugnant to the national feeling, yet so generally used that the repudiation of the fatal tendency has become a leading feature in the Conservative creed.

If we glance through the history of the last few years, we shall certainly discover a strong difference between the language used and the principles avowed by Liberals and Conservatives respectively, as regards our foreign and colonial policy. We are not sure that Mr. Disraeli has not in this case lighted upon a clear distinction between the two great divisions of public opinion. The Conservatives of England ardently desired Austrian victories in the Italian war; while the Liberals were so far seduced by "cosmopolitan jargon" as to throw their whole sympathies most heartily on to the side of Italian unity. Was "the residuum" Conservative in this respect? We refer for an answer to the reception given to Garibaldi. In the American war Conservatism and "good society" were on the side of the Southern States. The bulk of the general Liberal party, and every single Radical, were on the side of the North. Enamoured, we suppose, of cosmopolitan principles, the Liberals secured to them-

selves "the spurious force" which accidentally arose by the advocacy of the emancipation of slaves. In the war of last year between Austria and Prussia, Conservative opinion was strongly in favour of Austria, our gallant ally of old times, the chivalric representative of legitimist principles, the most determined foe of cosmopolitan heresies in these revolutionary days. On the other hand, there was much in the policy of Prussia to alienate the sympathies of the Liberal party. Military insolence, political immorality in the highest circles, success attempted and partially achieved by the triumph of the despotic power of an individual minister over the constitutional action of the representatives of the people, had this effect. But the unity of Germany, doubtless like the unity of Italy a cosmopolitan chimera, had attractions for the Liberal party which even the fact of its fate being bound up in the triumph of Bismarck could not put out of sight. The Liberal party saw in the struggle the possibility of a strong and free Germany being finally constituted, and a new civilising power being added to the forces which already exist. The educated character of the Prussian army, the perfection of its scientific appliances, the national spirit which animated the civilian troops who formed so large a portion of its strength, removed much of the natural antipathy which the military element of Prussian policy had not failed to excite; and when in a few months, or rather weeks, it became apparent that in consequence of the Prussian victories the great bulk of German liberal opinion would be able to carry out its emancipation from the feudal influences of the smaller courts, liberal opinion in England ceased to be divided, and declared without hesitation on what we fear Mr. Disraeli would call the cosmopolitan side.

In dealing with subject races, a similar distinction will be found to separate the two political camps. The Conservatives would say that their opponents were always on the side of the blacks against the whites, of the natives against the settlers, of subjects against their governors,—morbidly afraid of the chastising hand of authority, humanitarian, and, we presume, cosmopolitan to the perilous extent of discouraging our soldiers and officers in their energetic support of the cause of imperial authority. The Liberals would retort, that they do not protest against the exercise even of severe authority, provided they can be sure that distinctions of colour in those who suffer punishment do not entail distinctions in the severity or cruelty of the punishments inflicted. And possibly they would admit still further that they must plead guilty to some jealousy of certain military traditions and certain sides of military public opinion, which still prevail in our army when placed among semi-barbarous populations,—a jealousy certainly not shared, but, on the contrary, denounced by Conservative opinion. We could point to many individual cases where the distinct separation of Tory and Radical views with regard to questions affecting our dealings with subject races and our relations to foreign questions, have

come out in strong relief. Mr. Disraeli's sarcastic expressions had evidently a true as well as an exaggerated signification. He chose a term which denotes something unpractical, something contrary to our preconceived ideas, something new in English politics; but, side by side with the offensive exaggeration, we must be prepared to recognise that he shadowed forth a difference of view and of sentiment which is not unlikely to be a marked characteristic of future party conflicts. He supplied a partial answer to the question which, in the present chaos of politics, every one is compelled to ask himself, What will be the distinctive creed of the political parties which will be formed on the ruins of those which Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli have broken up?

The Liberals will, as before, justify the taunts of being, in colonial questions, sensitive as regards the treatment of subject-races, and, in all foreign questions, of being biassed in favour of the struggles of other countries in the direction of unity and liberty, while the Conservatives will continue, as regards our foreign policy, to be dynastic and legitimist. It is not our place either to applaud the one set of views or to stigmatise the other. We merely strive to draw public attention to probable distinctions which negative the supposition, so often put forward of late, that now that the Reform question is settled, it is difficult to see in what respects political parties will be found to differ from each other. And if our estimate, shared if we be right in our interpretation of Mr. Disraeli's phrase by that most eminent Conservative, be correct in this respect, every one can judge for himself, according to his recollection of recent events and his experience of the feelings of our working classes, into which scale their newly-acquired influence is likely to be thrown. Whether that residuum, to which Mr. Disraeli now frankly avows that he looks for the re-establishment of Tory ascendancy,—so avows at the close of a struggle from which party considerations were to be rigorously excluded,—is likely to sympathise with foreign dynasties struggling for existence, or with popular movements towards unity and liberty; whether a Francis-Joseph or a Garibaldi, a Governor Eyre or a William Garrison, is most likely to be the hero of the new arbiters of England's destinies, we leave our readers to decide for themselves.

On one point it is desirable to remove all misunderstanding. We do not think it at all a matter of course,—on the contrary, we think it highly improbable,—that the future Liberal and Conservative parties will be composed of the same men who till now have composed the parties bearing these names. In proportion as the old hereditary subjects of discussion disappear, the hereditary character of party, if we may use the phrase, must also disappear. While the question of civil and religious liberty had still to be fought out, other differences remained in the background. They cropped up continually, but they were not necessarily adopted into the creeds which formed the shib-

boleth of parties. But now that we are far on the road to the solution of this class of questions, it will be found, if we are not mistaken, that their solution by no means brings opinions into one groove; that, with new circumstances, new feelings and new national necessities arise; and that the different interpretation of these national necessities and national sentiments form the basis for political parties as distinct as those whose alternations of fortune have hitherto constituted our political history. But, as to individuals, there is no reason to believe that the Liberal party, or indeed the Conservative party, of the future will be composed, even in the bulk, of the same "personnel" as before.

Many sincere champions of Reform, for instance, may be conscientiously compelled to support the views of the future Conservative party as to foreign or colonial policy rather than those of their old friends and allies. On the other hand, some of those who have been indifferent to or opposed to Reform, may find themselves identified with those Liberals henceforth, against whom they have hitherto contended with all their might.

We wish to avoid all considerations of the persons who are to compose the new parties which are likely to replace the old. We conceive that, when the new Reform Bill was passed, a line was drawn under the history of parties as constituted heretofore. Some of the old questions indeed remain. The work of Reform is not completed yet. The distribution of seats, the representation of minorities, the mode of voting, must all be considered as matters still remaining open, almost by common consent. That which was passed because it was represented to be a settlement, is already admitted to be no settlement at all. Impatience overreached itself. The Prime Minister himself shadowed forth the possibility of further schemes for redistribution being favourably considered at the earliest date. The representation of minorities is avowed to be only experimental, and indeed the extraordinary injustice of its present incidence condemns it at once as a most temporary arrangement. At present all that it has effected is to clip the power of the majorities in large towns, whose claim to increased instead of diminished representation had been previously asserted by the votes of the House. The operation performed on the three-cornered counties did not, in Conservative eyes, materially modify the advantage which they expected from the new system in the towns, because, in matters to which they attach supreme importance, they are less likely to encounter bitter hostility from liberal county members, themselves representing the landed interest, than from the representatives of the majorities of great cities, whose class of liberalism is so especially obnoxious to country gentlemen. The omission of almost all allusions to the counties in those debates which resulted in the adoption of the new system, showed the animus of the change. But it was to be experimental; that is to say, it was to be regarded as the beginning of further change, of further work in store for Parliament.

Liberals, on the other hand, who would have opposed that particular application of the minority system as a substantive measure, —unless there were a prospect of an extension of the principle,— avowedly voted in favour of the scheme as introducing the thin end of the wedge, regardless of the present sacrifice, in the hope of carrying by-and-by a system of personal as against local representation. A vast variety of political questions has been opened up by the representation of minorities. It is an invitation to the invention of new constitutions. Theoretical patentees of more perfect forms of representation than the rude but practical system under which we have lived hitherto, now have their work cut out for them, and settlement is farther removed than ever. In the matter of enfranchisement, a leap has been taken bolder than five-sixths of both Houses of Parliament desired, in order to reach the bottom at once; but as regards the adjustment of political power by the distribution of votes, our legislation has started on a new incline, of which no one can foresee the depths.

We have spoken of these questions connected with Reform which still await settlement as belonging to the class of subjects which have divided parties hitherto. But even on these we fail to find the old distinctions maintained, or the same grouping of individual politicians. Lord Russell is found on the side of the representation of minorities, Mr. Gladstone is against it; Mr. Mill votes against Mr. Bright, and Mr. Disraeli has pronounced opinions contrary to the views of the whole of his party in the House of Lords, and of the bulk of his party in the House of Commons.

The treatment of the important, but yet subordinate subject of the mode of voting, which also remains unsettled, is more likely to resemble past debates. Conservatives, as well as Radicals, do not hesitate to express unqualified dissatisfaction with the present system. The Conservatives ask for the protection of voting papers, in favour of timid or fastidious voters who dislike and fear a crowd; and the Radicals ask for the protection of the ballot in favour of dependent voters who are exposed to intimidation and bribery. Mr. Disraeli knows best whether the poorest electors on whom Conservatives are to found their hopes are more likely to be on the side of voting papers or on the side of the ballot.

No lines of demarcation between parties have hitherto been more clearly defined than those drawn by questions connected with the development of religious liberty. In many respects it may be said that the battle of absolute religious toleration has been won. There remain here and there upon our statute-book traces of the old system, but they are being rapidly swept away; and no work appears to have been more relished by the present Parliament than that of removing every invidious distinction or exclusion, on account of religious differences, which might still be found to exist. We do not anticipate

that this work will be less vigorously conducted by a reformed Parliament; and if there be any one set of questions more likely than another to keep the old Liberal party together, much in the form in which it has existed hitherto, it would be that which deals with education on the one hand, and with clerical ascendancy on the other. Lord Russell, in the letter to which we have alluded before, justly spoke of the important part which the question of unsectarian education is likely to play in future party conflicts. It is one branch of the political religious controversy which still leaves much work to be done. That within a few years the religious difficulty which has so long prevented the active and popular development of education, from Oxford and Cambridge down to the smallest parish school, will be practically solved, is, we think, open to little doubt. The country is not yet in favour of secular, as against religious education, and the vast majority would still prefer that timely concession and mutual forbearance might render arrangements possible, under which religious instruction would continue to form an important element of every school. But the country must not be driven to choose between the two,—between improved popular education on the one hand, and the maintenance of denominational teaching on the other. It is certain which of the two would in such a case have to go to the wall.

In reviewing some of the probable effects of the "leap in the dark," we have thus far mainly considered the action of the new electors, with reference to that class of subjects which have hitherto divided parties, and been treated as "vital questions." We are disposed to think that it is still more important to inquire what new lines of demarcation are likely to arise, and what changes of relative position may take place in some of those portions of the creeds of parties, which have hitherto been treated as secondary, and of minor interest. We reserve for a future article the task of considering what new questions are likely to be forced upon the legislature by the new electors, or what old questions,—on which the greatest latitude of opinion has hitherto been allowed to all political parties,—are likely, under the new Constitution, to become rigorous tests of loyalty to those new parties which may probably now take the place of the old.

ALL FOR GREED.

CHAPTER I.

A VERY SMALL TOWN.

In the whole west of France there is no prettier town than D——. Lying rather out of the way, it has as yet had but few pretexts for "improving" itself, and in many respects presents the same appearance as it did some half a century ago. D—— is nothing in particular; not a fishing town, for the sea is too far off; nor a manufacturing town, for "business" of that kind is absorbed by Cholet, which is some ten leagues distant, and represents the manufacturing interest. D—— is, if anything, an occasional place of passage or rest for drovers, who still find it quickest and cheapest to drive their Chôletais oxen from the banks of the Lèvres to the more central towns on the banks of the Loire, pending the establishment of small local railway branches. No railroad leads to D——. If it did, old Martin Prévost would not have been the great ruler of that small town that he truly was.

Martin Prévost was of Swiss extraction. His grandfather had been valet de chambre, steward, factotum, alter ego, to a famous Vendéan chief, a proud rich noble of the ancien régime, but one of the few who preferred the hard active life of a partisan to anything Court favour could offer him, and who was genuinely glad to exchange Versailles for the hazards and hardships of La Chouannerie. The trading principle being uppermost in the mind of the Helvetian, the confidant of Monsieur le Marquis soon became rich. It was said that he managed to sell a good many of the necessaries of existence to both sides at once, and that both were his grateful customers. He was never known to betray either, but merely got out of each all he could. Monsieur le Marquis died in exile, earning starvation wages by the French lessons he gave in an English seaport town, and his valet de chambre died possessed of a house in D——, in which he had, at the time of the Consulate, opened what Americans would call a "store." His principle was one of beautiful simplicity. He bought everything and sold everything; striving only with delightful single-mindedness never to realise any profit under twenty per cent. upon either operation. He married a wife who was crooked and blind of one eye, but these slight defects were fully compensated for to him by the dower she brought him, and which he laid out so as to double it,—of which fact she never had the smallest token or proof.

His son was unworthy of his sire, and did nothing to improve his

position in life. The father judged his offspring severely, but took care to get him advantageously married, and when he died, recommended him to the care of his wife.

Prévost II. went through life and out of it, unnoticed; but did not dissipate his estate, so that, at his death, in 1835, he left what his father had left him, and what his wife's dot had added to that, untouched and entire to his two sons.

In Martin Prévost, the younger of these two sons, the spirit of the grandfather burned strongly, and was intensified by that atmosphere of barter which, in France above all countries, is the very "over-soul" of mankind in this nineteenth century. Martin Prévost carried the destinies of his house to a remarkable height, and at the time of which we are writing he was virtually the ruler of D—— and its population of 3,800 souls.

Martin Prévost was the money-lender of the whole district, and as those who borrowed rarely repaid in cash, and as he never lent save on unexceptionable security, it is not difficult to calculate how from decade to decade Martin's power and wealth increased. Soon after his father's death he bought a Charge de Notaire, which he kept for six or seven years, and then sold to considerable advantage; for he had gained for this office such repute that people of high standing came to consult him from distant towns even, and his opinion and advice were worth gold! When Monsieur Martin Prévost sold his Etude he called this proceeding retiring from business. "Je me retire des affaires," said he; but there were one or two sharp-eyed individuals, and D—— numbered marvellously few such, who opined that on the contrary this was the very period when Prévost's business seriously began. By the time he had been six or seven years a notary, no family within twenty or thirty miles had a secret of which he was unpossessed; and when he delivered over the various and voluminous documents of his office to his unsuspecting successor, he carried away in his prodigious memory the details of the financial complications of the entire neighbourhood. But old Prévost was a wise man, and though his power was felt and acknowledged, he never allowed it to be supposed that he ever could possibly presume upon it. He lived well, but modestly and economically, having but one servant, a woman for whom he had the deepest respect, and as outdoor servant a man, who was gardener, labourer, groom, and commissionaire to Madame Jean.

It used to be said in and about D—— that no one knew anything that was not good, and that no one felt anything that was, touching Martin Prévost, yet every one applied to him, and every one, at some moment or other of their lives, trusted him. He had never married, but he had adopted his nephew, and given the young fellow an excellent education. Old Martin's brother had turned out ill,—that is, unlucky,—and had died young in America, whither he had emigrated,

terribly in debt. What became of his wife, or who or what she was, no one in D—— ever heard. Some people said she had run away from him; but Martin had the boy sent to him, when he was only six years old, had brought him up since then, and, I repeat it, had brought him up well. What created no little astonishment was, that he had not brought him up over strictly, but in the way of liberty and money gave him to the full as much as other young men of his station could boast of possessing.

Wednesday was market day in D——, and on a certain Wednesday, not quite two years ago, a little group of two or three women was gathered round the open door of Martin Prévost's house talking with Madame Jean. There was the same character of sharpness in each of those female faces, but Madame Jean had an air of authority which the others lacked, and the basket she carried on her strong stout arm was half as big and half as full again as any of the other women's baskets. It was not much past eight o'clock, and though the October sun was warm, the air was still cool, and a fresh but not unpleasant wind shook the boughs of the lime-trees overhanging the terrace of old Prévost's garden.

"Certainly poultry is out of all price," cried bitterly a skinny, black-browed woman, looking enviously at Madame Jean, and at a pair of huge Cochin-Chinese legs that protruded from her basket. "We up at the Mairie haven't gone out of beef and vegetables for I don't know how long;—and beef, up now at thirteen sous, one franc six a kilo, as they will call it;—well! I reckon by pounds and sous, I can't take to their new ways, though I do belong to the Administration." At this the speaker drew herself up with pride.

"Yes," said Madame Jean, "beef is dear, and veal is bad,—all strings;—and poultry is dear, and everything is dear."

"But nothing is too dear for la maison Prévost," interrupted the purveyor of Monsieur le Maire. "Mère Jubine well knows where she can place a fowl even for the sum of three francs ten,—four francs even, who can tell?"

"Mère Jubine owed it me!" replied with dictatorial tone Madame Jean. "The last I bought from her was an unsatisfactory fowl, so I reckoned it her at only half price, and took this one to make up. Our young man is not well just now, and wants light food, so I shall let him eat poultry for a few days. Bless my soul! it ain't such an extra after all. With two pots au feu there's the whole week; reckon:—all depends on the management, no extras are any matter if you are a menagère, and if you are not, why you come to think bread itself an extra; but where are the ménagères?" Madame Jean said this defiantly, and the other matrons were cowed.

"Is anything serious the matter with Monsieur Richard?" asked the mildest looking of the group in a propitiatory manner.

"Serious? No!" responded Madame Jean, as though it would

have been absurd to suppose that anything serious could be the matter in so prosperous a house as that of Monsieur Prévost. "Serious? No! but you know he never was the strongest of the strong; he's not a Turk nor a weight-thrower at the fair, and he's never quite got over his attack of the lungs this winter; he's delicate, if you will, but care makes up for everything, and he gets lots of it."

"Why didn't you buy that hare of Mère Lucas?" whined out the chief of the mayor's kitchen. "I've heard say game was good for invalids."

"Because I didn't choose," retorted Madame Jean sharply.

"Oh!" was the rejoinder. "Faites excuse. I thought it might be because of something else," and the woman looked warlike. But war with Madame Jean was not a thing to be dreamt of, as she quickly showed. Turning sharply round, and resting the whole of her outspread hand upon one end of her big basket, which drove the other end of that well-filled recipient so far up behind her shoulder that the Cochin-Chinese legs seemed almost sprouting from her back like cherubs' wings—"Madelon," said she, "you mean Prosper Morel. I know quite well what you mean; but we know all about it as well as you do, and we don't want Monsieur le Maire or anybody else to inform us of anything. I had my thoughts about that hare, if you must know; that hare never was shot,—that hare was caught, caught mayhap on Monsieur Rivière's land, therefore stolen. There; call it by its name, stolen; a deal more likely stolen by Prosper Morel than by any one else; but what then? primo, where's the proof? You believe it; the Maire believes it; the Garde's certain sure of it; but more than all, I believe it; but what then? Prosper has had his permit taken from him; Monsieur wouldn't help him to get it; and what then? Suppose the Garde catches him, and draws up his proces verbal, and he gets condemned, and fined, and justice is satisfied, and suppose Monsieur turns him out of his hut up there in the forest, and gets another woodcutter. Well, suppose all that, what then? Who'll be shot in a by-path, or have his throat cut in his back shop, or have his house burnt over his bed?" The women all looked aghast and nodded their heads ominously, as though admitting that it was but too true.

"You fancy, do you," continued Madame Jean, "that that silent, sulky, hulking Breton would let the worst come to the worst without having his revenge. But all the same, Madelon: don't you imagine we don't know as well as Monsieur le Maire what goes on in D——; only I don't buy trapped game. Monsieur Richard's chasse suffices us. We are regular people and eat the hares and partridges off our own stubble. If Mère Lucas makes one franc fifty clear profit out of a hare, she pays fifty centimes, taking the risk. She's welcome to it, but I don't put the one franc fifty into her pocket, not I!"

"Monsieur le Curé's Lise does," observed the mild-mannered woman.

"Oh! Monsieur le Curé's Lise!" snarled Madelon in her most contemptuous tone, and as though no proceeding could possibly be too objectionable for Monsieur le Curé's Lise.

"Well! Monsieur le Curé's Lise?" retorted Madame Jean. "She's a wise woman; she gets for two francs a hare worth four, not to say five, if we were in carnival time, and no harm done. Monsieur le Curé may do what he likes."

"There she goes across the street," remarked Madelon.

"And Céleste from down at Vérancour's, with her," added her soft-spoken companion.

A laugh, indulged in together, by Madame Jean and Madelon, seemed to establish peace between them.

"It would be a fine sight to see what she has bought at market," sneered Madelon; "two potatoes, three olives, and an onion, maybe! They do say that on fast days Céleste serves up fish a week old!"

"Fish!" echoed Madame Jean; "fish out of sea or river comes a deal too dear for the château!" She laid a tremendously pompous accent on the first syllable. "I was once inside their doors, and in going away I had just to cross the dining-room as they were coming in to dinner. If you'll believe me, there was, besides a soup of bread and water, nothing but lentils and a red herring. But, Lord! weren't they set out in fine silver dishes? It was the Wednesday of the quatre temps de Septembre. I've wondered to myself ever since then what it is they live upon; for the wind that blows, however healthy it may be, won't keep body and soul together in three grown-up people."

"Live upon?" exclaimed almost savagely Madelon. "Why, upon their own importance!"

"To be sure," remarked the conciliatory one of the group, "they do believe in themselves!"

"Yes," muttered Madame Jean; "to make up for nobody else's believing in them."

"Never mind," added Madelon; "let's see what Céleste has got in the way of flesh for these grandees, for it's not the quatre temps de Septembre now, and they must put something more than vanity into their stomachs, all the same. Cé——"

"Hush!" said Madame Jean, stopping the loud appeal which the other woman was preparing to address to the two bonnes who were at the further side of the street. "Hush! There's Monsieur le Vicomte himself turning the corner down to the left, and coming this way."

"Ugh!" grunted Madelon. "What's he wanting up hereabouts? I thought his daily mass was hardly over by this time."

"He's coming here," said Madame Jean; and a moment later the person alluded to came up from behind, divided the group of women, touching his hat as he passed, and saying "Pardon, mesdames,"

confronted Madame Jean on the doorsteps on which she was standing. The women nodded to each other and parted, leaving Madame Jean alone on the threshold of the maison Prévost.

"Could I see Monsieur Prévost for a moment?" inquired the new comer, politely.

"Quite impossible at this hour," rejoined Madame Jean, after a most stately fashion. "Monsieur has not yet breakfasted. It is not yet nine. Monsieur breakfasts as the clock strikes ten, and Monsieur never sees any one before breakfast. You have not come by appointment?" she asked.

"No—not exactly—but——"

"Of course not," interrupted Madame Jean. "Monsieur would have informed me."

"But my business is very pressing," urged the petitioner, "and would not take up more than a quarter of an hour."

But it was no use. Madame Jean was "in the exercise of her functions," and any one who has ever had dealings with them, knows in that particular state how unmanageable is a Frenchman or a Frenchwoman. Madame Jean was not impolite; she was impervious, opaque, not to be penetrated by an influence from without. He who strove to propitiate her, had to bear his ill-success complacently,—for fear of worse,—and accept her permission to come again at eleven o'clock. She had the satisfaction of making things go her own way without any extraordinary effort; and though it could not be objected that she was rude, she contrived never once to address her interlocutor as "Monsieur le Vicomte."

CHAPTER II.

THE MARRIAGE PORTION.

Madame Jean had barely witnessed the retreat of her enemy, for such it appeared he was, however innocently, when she became aware that her master was calling her from within. She shut the house-door, and, putting down her basket in the passage, went upstairs to a room on the first-floor, whence the voice issued. Opening a door to the right, she stood in Monsieur Prévost's presence.

He was standing close to a large table covered with account books and papers, and he held an open letter in his hand.

Martin Prévost was about sixty-two or three, and though he looked strong and bien conservé, still he looked his age. He was above the middle height, gaunt rather than spare, with a bony frame, an immense hook-nose, and two small, sharp eyes, quite close together. There were about him all the signs of power of an inferior order; power of plodding, power of endurance, and capacity of privation, and the unfailing marks of acquisitiveness,—the rapacious eye and hand.

"Look at that," he said, in an angry tone, as he thrust into Madame Jean's fingers the open letter he held in his own; "the fellow has just been here, and I have told him that if he can't clear himself of these accusations he must go. I wash my hands of him. I'll have no quarrels with the Administration. He shall be turned out."

Meanwhile Madame Jean read the letter, which ran thus:—

"SIR AND HONOURED COLLEAGUE" (Monsieur Prévost had been the mayor of D—— three years before, and the present man was his successor),—"I think it right to warn you of the irregularities of the man named Prosper Morel, in your employ. As you are aware, he has no permis de chasse this season, but I have every reason to believe he steals game in the night-time. The garde, François Lejeune, is morally convinced of having seen this individual committing his malpractices, though he has hitherto contrived to escape being taken in flagrante delicto; and Monsieur Rivière has already twice complained of him to me officially. As the man is employed by you, and as nothing would give me greater pain, sir and honoured colleague, than to have to take any steps annoying to you, I venture to beg that you will admonish him and force him to renounce his malpractices, in default of which I should be obliged to proceed with a rigour I should deeply deplore, and set the gendarmerie in action.

"I remain, &c.,

"SIMON COLLOT, Mayor."

When Madame Jean reached the word gendarmerie, she, for certain excellent reasons which we shall know later, curled her lip in disdain, and muttered something unintelligible, but which seemed to imply that she knew better than to indulge in the slightest alarm respecting that gallant body of defenders of the state.

"Now look you here, Sophie," said Monsieur Prévost, when his prime minister had concluded her perusal of the administrative appeal, "my mind is made up. Prosper Morel goes about his business at the end of the month. I'll have nobody of his kind about me; it compromises one's position. It's intolerable; he shall leave at the end of the month."

Madame Jean shook her head. "He's been here sixteen years," objected she.

"What does that matter?" retorted her master.

"His wife was the little one's bonne."

"That has nothing to do with it."

"No;—I know it hasn't," observed the woman, "nothing at all;—only she saved his life when he had the typhus fever, and lost her own by catching it."

"What the devil has that in common with her husband?" growled Martin Prévost. "The woman's dead."

"Yes; but how is the man to gain his bread if he leaves here?"

persisted Madame Jean. "He's at home a long way off, down in Basse Bretagne, and he's got no home at all when he gets there."

"He must beg," replied Martin Prévost.

"Begging's forbidden by law," answered Madame Jean. "He must steal or he must starve."

"Well, he must go, that's certain," rejoined her master.

Madame Jean fixed a hard, bold look on old Martin Prévost, and though the look was both bold and hard, it was a far better one than that which shot from his keen ferret eyes, and he quailed before it.

"Prosper Morel is a dangerous man," said she authoritatively.

"Bah!" grumbled Monsieur Prévost; "a man without a sou is never dangerous."

"You mistake," replied Madame Jean, "a man with ever so little money is not dangerous, but a man with none at all is; and I tell you, beware of Prosper Morel; don't cast him off, give him another chance." In everything Madame Jean seemed used to have her own way. She apparently ruled and governed, and when she retired from her master's presence, it was settled that Prosper Morel should be severely lectured by both Monsieur Prévost and herself, but that he should retain his office of bûcheron, and the abode it secured to him in the forest, on condition of good behaviour in future.

While this discussion was going on up-stairs, another little scene, in immediate connection with it, was being enacted on the ground-floor. The window of a room at the back of the house, looking over a paved court, and beyond that to the garden, was open, and seated at it was a young man, in a well-padded armchair, listlessly and lazily smoking a cigar. A shadow fell across him, projected by the figure of a man who passed in front of the open window, and touched his cap as he did so.

"Good day, Prosper," said the young man in an indolent tone of voice.

"Salut, Monsieur Richard," mumbled the other, and went his way.

"Prosper," called the young man, "when will you bring me down those rods? The weather isn't at all bad for fishing, but my rods are all too short."

The man turned round, came back, and stood right in front of the window. He was decidedly disagreeable to look at, slouching, ungainly, clumsily put together. You couldn't help comparing him to those unfinished animals which are shown to us as nature's first efforts before the flood. He did not look bad, but unpleasant, an incomplete product, with the mud and slime of that jelly period sticking to his features and limbs.

"I can't bring you the rods, Monsieur Richard," said he, in a thick, drawling voice, "for I am going away,—going for ever. Monsieur up

there"—and he gave a jerk with his thumb in the direction of the first-floor—"has turned me away."

"What for?" inquired Monsieur Richard.

The man scratched his head, and looked more hopelessly stupid than before. "Oh, histoire de rien!" he drawled out; "histoire de Monsieur le Maire."

"Nonsense, Prosper," argued the young man, laying his cigar on the window-sill; "you can't go."

"I am going, Monsieur Richard," he rejoined; "but——" and everything in him seemed, as it were, to set at that moment; lips, eyebrows, and hands, stiffened into an expression of brutish revengefulness that was still more stupid than threatening. Decidedly the ruling characteristic of the man was blockheadedness. I can find no other term.

"Nonsense, Prosper; hold your tongue!" rejoined Monsieur Richard. "Come round here into my room and tell me all about it. I must set you right with my uncle."

The man did as he was bid, and slouchingly skulked off to the back entrance. And certainly Monsieur Richard did look a likely person to make peace between people. He was so very blond and gentle-looking; not strong, decidedly, as Madame Jean had stated of him, but with an air of good-nature and delicate health that made you pity him and account for the evident laziness,—it was more than indolence,—of his nature.

As eleven o'clock was striking Monsieur le Vicomte came, and claimed the audience that had been promised him by Madame Jean, who was graciously pleased herself to introduce him into the same room on the first-floor in which we have already been made acquainted with the master of the house.

This room was Martin Prévost's sanctuary. In it were assembled the several objects of his dearest care,—his correspondence, his account-books, and his safe. That same caisse de sureté was about the only indication that Monsieur Prévost had ever allowed himself to afford to the outer world of his riches; and, naturally, legends had taken it for their basis in the little world of D——. It had come all the way from Paris, and fabulous sums were mentioned as its price. This infinitely annoyed Martin Prévost, and if he could have kept his wealth securely in his cellar, he would have done so gladly. Of course his natural instinct, as is that of his entire class, was to bury it, to hide it, but education and the age having left their impress on him, he resisted this impulse; and, sure enough, there in that safe were all Martin Prévost's securities, bonds, shares, obligations,—and cash.

Well; his visitor entered, and sat down, and having something really important to say, began—as in that case people invariably do—by speaking of something utterly unimportant, and irrelevant to the matter in hand.

There they were, face to face; the grandson of the Swiss valet de

chambre and the "son of the crusaders;" and, ma foi! if the truth must be told, there was very little to choose between them as to mere external aspect. Monsieur de Vérancour was not by any means aristocratic looking; not a bit of a François Premier, or a Maréchal de Richelieu, or a Lauzun, or any other type of the fiery grace and brilliant corruption of the past;—not an atom about him of the pale, tall, worn-out, exquisite old gentleman whom romanciers, as a rule, oppose to bull-headed blown-out boursiers, as the true representatives of an era you would fancy they deplored;—not a sign of all this in Monsieur le Vicomte. He was rather of the bull-headed type himself, and instead of having an aquiline nose, which, to be truthful, Martin Prévost had, his nose was a thick, stumpy nose; the black hairs which encircled his bald crown were bristles; his face was broad, and its colouring red-brown; his figure was stout, and not very tall; and his hands were ugly, and the nails not clean. His dress was slovenly, and he looked like a man who used his limbs a good deal, and lived much in the open air in all weathers. His age was not much past fifty.

Between these two men, one made and the other marred by '89, was there then any difference at all? More than you suppose, but quite other than you think. For the present, we will go no further than mere manner. As they sat there opposite to each other, Martin Prévost seemed to have in many respects the advantage of the two, but he lacked one thing which the Vicomte had, and that one thing was ease.

After having exhausted the subject of pears;—old Prévost was a pear fancier, and the orchard at the Château was supposed to possess some wonderfully fine specimens of almost extinct sorts;—Monsieur de Vérancour suddenly plunged into the subject for which he had so impatiently sought the present interview.

"You are curious to know the business which brings me to you to-day?" said he with a smile. Old Prévost bowed stiffly, as though he wished to mark that he was not curious at all. "Well, I have a great secret to tell you, and I rely entirely on your discretion, for such things must not be talked about. I am going to marry my eldest daughter——"

"To Monsieur de Champmorin," interrupted old Prévost in a freezing tone.

The Vicomte was very near giving a visible start, but did not do so.

"You really are a magician!" exclaimed he with a laugh; "but all the same I count on your discretion; these things must not be talked about till they are absolutely settled."

"And this is not absolutely settled," added old Prévost, half interrogatively, and fixing his two small keen eyes on his visitor.

"Well,—a marriage is only settled when the bridal mass is chanted," replied the Vicomte, evasively.

"Monsieur de Champmorin has thirty thousand francs a year now,"

continued Martin Prévost, not unloosing his piercing gaze from his hearer's countenance. "He will have at his uncle's death a house in Paris, in the neighbourhood of the General Post Office, that will give him fifteen thousand francs more, because that he will divide with his sister; the uncle leaves to both alike; but he will have his grand-aunt's property all to himself at her death;—she's near eighty now;—and Saulnois, if it was only decently attended to, ought to yield five-and-twenty thousand francs a year net. So you see thirty and fifteen are forty-five; and say only twenty,—because of course he'll farm Saulnois ill!—that makes sixty-five thousand francs a year, first and last. Monsieur de Champmorin is out and out the best parti in the department. Have you any objection to make to him?" Martin Prévost asked this question, fixing his eyes still more like screws into the features of the Vicomte's face; and then, before giving him time to answer, "I know it has been said he drinks, and is violent, and ill brought up, and lives only with his farm servants," he went on;—"but that would hardly be objected to. Mademoiselle Félicie is very clever, and so saintly a person that she would perhaps win him into better conduct;—and then, in your society man and wife have so little need to be together! If les convenances are satisfied, that is the essential point,—the rest is only of consequence in our class, in little humble households;—but do tell me; you surely have no objections to make to Monsieur de Champmorin?"

No! the truth had to come out, whole and entire. Monsieur de Vérancour had no objection whatever to make to Monsieur de Champmorin; but Monsieur de Champmorin made one small requirement of him—namely, that that most accomplished and most saintly person, Mademoiselle Félicie, should have a dot of some sort or kind. It had to come out, and it did come out, drawn bit by bit, but wholly and to the last morsel, by the pressure of Martin Prévost's able and pitiless hand.

"So you would mortgage Les Grandes Bruyères; would you?" he abruptly asked when he knew all he wanted to know. "Well, Monsieur le Vicomte, you are best able to say what income that valuable property yields you;" and Monsieur Prévost commented upon these words with a smile imperceptibly ironical.

"Les Grandes Bruyères was the most valuable portion of my great-grandfather's whole estate in this part of the country," replied quietly Monsieur de Vérancour.

"Was,—yes, granted; but what is it now? What does it yield you?"

"Oh, me? That is altogether another thing. I am too poor to farm such a property as it ought to be farmed; but you know what the land at Les Grandes Bruyères is worth, my dear Monsieur Prévost;" and in his turn the Vicomte fixed his eyes upon his interlocutor in a way that the latter did not find agreeable. The real truth of the matter was this; the bridegroom-elect of Mademoiselle Félicie had, after much discussion with his notary, and as much more between this functionary

and the future father-in-law, agreed to limit his prétentions to the sum of sixty thousand francs, moyennant quoi, he was content to take Mademoiselle Félicie "for better, for worse." It was a miserably small sum,—not three thousand pounds of English money,—and any one might see how, with his "hopes and expectations" and thirty thousand francs a year in hand, Monsieur de Champmorin was letting himself go dirt-cheap at such a price. It was a splendid "placement" for Mademoiselle Félicie; every atom of advantage was on her side. Words failed wherewith to paint the generous disinterestedness of Monsieur de Champmorin; but then, as his notary remarked, this was a "love match." Such was the excuse urged, when this bridegroom, in such high financial condition, consented to be purchased for the paltry sum of sixty thousand francs! And the public were expected to adopt his view of the transaction, and call it a "mariage d'amour!" But unluckily Monsieur de Vérancour had not the sixty thousand francs to give! Do what he would, he could not scrape them together. This, however, led merely to prolonged discussion and to the acceptance of another form of payment by the Champmorin notary. Instead of the capital paid down, M. de Vérancour was to pay the annual interest upon it to his daughter, who was to receive three thousand francs a year, £120, paid quarterly,—£30 every three months! Well, it was a cheap price for a husband, if you come to think of it! But now came the difficulty; how to raise the money?—Martin Prévost! There was the solution! And so Monsieur le Vicomte came to Martin Prévost, and had to tell him all, and leave not one little corner of his domestic embarrassments, however humiliating they might be, unrevealed. It had to be done, or all chance of placing Mademoiselle Félicie was at an end. At the end of half an hour, then, Martin Prévost held the destinies of the Vérancour family in his hands.

The point at issue was this;—the property of Les Grandes Bruyères was worth one hundred and fifty thousand francs any day to a man less poor than the Vicomte;—worth that to be sold, and worth that for the income it would yield to any one capable of farming it properly. But to M. de Vérancour it was worth nothing, or worse than nothing, and his was the position of so many thousand needy landholders in France, to whom their land is a dead weight instead of a source of gain.

The long and the short of it was, that Martin Prévost, refusing inflexibly to lend one farthing upon any security whatever, and all idea of a mortgage being at an end, condescended at last to promise to purchase Les Grandes Bruyères for the sum of seventy thousand francs, the "odd ten" being destined to the trousseau and inevitable marriage expenses. But how they had haggled, before they got to this conclusion, they alone can understand who have had the misfortune to be mixed up in France with "marrying and giving in marriage."

"But why not at once give Mademoiselle Félicie her dot of sixty

thousand francs, since I buy Les Grandes Bruyères, and you get the money?" inquired old Prévost.

"Because with half the sum I can quintuple it in a year," replied the Vicomte sagaciously.

"Ah!" drawled out old Prevost; "you can quintuple it, can you? Well, I wish I knew that secret! But you gentlefolks have a vivacity of intelligence that is surprising sometimes to us mere plodders and hard-working bourgeois."

"I must not tell you yet," resumed Monsieur de Vérancour, with an air of diplomatic importance, "but there is an affair about to be launched that will make millionaires of all those who are connected with it; I have friends at the head of it, and——" he stopped suddenly, as though on the brink of violating some awful secret; "and when the time comes," he resumed, "I will try to interest you in it too."

"Serviteur!" answered old Prévost, with a profound bow. "I am infinitely obliged."

Just as Monsieur de Vérancour got up to go, the money-lender spoke again. "There seems to me to be *one* little difficulty about your arrangements, Monsieur le Vicomte," murmured Martin Prévost blandly; "you will pay to Madame de Champmorin the yearly sum of three thousand francs, but when you come to marry Mademoiselle Geneviève you will have to do precisely the same thing. She can force you to do it by law. What will you dispose of then? I may be dead by that time, and you may perhaps not find any one so anxious to do you a service." He called the operation he had just been engaged upon by this name!

Monsieur de Vérancour turned round, and with a broad frank smile, "Vévette!" echoed he; "oh! Vévette will never marry. Vévette will go into a convent at her majority. It will be impossible to prevent her; and if she should change her mind, why, I shall by that time be able to give her such a dot as will enable her to marry a duke and a peer."

"Well, by that time I shall probably be dead," again repeated old Prévost, following his visitor to the door of the room; "but don't forget Mademoiselle Vévette. She is a very charming young lady, and the law will force you to give precisely the same advantages to the two sisters."

When Monsieur le Vicomte de Vérancour was in the street, and trudging home as fast as he could, in order to write by post time to the Champmorin notary that all was made smooth now for the "placing" of his daughter Félicie in her most romantic "love match," he never once asked himself what impelled old Martin Prévost to take such a lively interest in the destiny of his daughter Vévette.

CHAPTER III.

THE SISTERS.

THE château, as it was termed, more often derisively than otherwise, had really once upon a time been the seignorial residence of D——, but the ancestors of the Vérancour family were not its possessors then. It had come to them by marriage. Somewhere about the end of the sixteenth century a daughter of the house of Beauvoisin, the chief of which was the then châtelain and lord of D——, had been given in marriage by Henry IV. to the son of a recently ennobled échevin of Angers, whose riches, acquired no one precisely knew how, were regarded by the practical monarch as a sufficient compensation for want of birth. Both sides,—Beauvoisins as well as Vérancours,—were Protestants, but after that historical mass to which the Béarnois so promptly made up his mind as the price for the Crown of France, Vérancours and Beauvoisins, and the greater part of their families, went all in a heap together back again into the venerable bosom of Mother Church. Of the old Beauvoisin race there were soon none left. They had dated from before the Crusades, and had never been anything but warriors, who, being inapt at learning any useful art or trade, had been absorbed by those who could. It was an act of grace and honesty on the part of the Vérancour people that they did not assume the name of the extinct family, but they assumed a vast deal more than its pride, and a more over-bearing set never were known. Their own name, their patronymic, dating from the thirteenth century, was Saunier; which made it probable that some ancestor of theirs had originally dug or traded in salt from the salt-marshes of Brittany; but of this name, which, associated with that of Vérancour, they had borne under the Valois kings, all trace was rubbed out even in their own memories. They were "sons of crusaders" to all intents and purposes, had grown prejudiced precisely in the inverse ratio to their power, and were landed in this hard high-pressure nineteenth century of ours with all the attributes and incapacities belonging to races whose raison d'être is no more.

There was an enormous difference between these last descendants of the Sauniers de Vérancour and their own great grandfathers of the Court of Versailles. These people believed in themselves, whilst the others made believe to do so. The wealthy "ennoblis" of the times of Louis XIV. and Louis XV. shared with a large number of grand seigneurs the consciousness of the surprise their own fathers would have felt at seeing the grandeur they had achieved.*

* The Duc de Gesvres (Potier), for instance, who upon one occasion at Court, addressed thus one of his colleagues:—"M. le Duc! what would our fathers in heaven say, if they could see us where we are?"

Whereas after the destroying angel of '89 had jumbled the old and the new into one uniform mass, leaving no particular sign to any individual victim, all came together at the Resurrection of 1815,—above all, too, after the grand tragi-comedy of the Empire,—as equal. From the equality of suffering they inferred the equality of caste, and swamping any minor differences, agreed to set themselves apart from the rest of their fellows.

To this plan the smallest provincial families, totally oblivious of their origin, adhered with marvellous tenacity, and what is more marvellous still, the rest of the world did its best to take them at their word. The priests honoured them, society accepted them, the really illustrious houses of the land intermarried with them, all governments coquetted with them, the peasantry sneered at them, and the bourgéoisie abhorred them, as if they sprang indisputably from Brahma's eyebrow or Jupiter's thigh. Whatever might be the purity or impurity of the blood in their veins, they fully enjoyed the advantages and disadvantages of the position they attributed to themselves, and in many instances gave extraordinary examples of self-renunciation and of sacrifice to what they termed the respect for their names. Our friend, the worthy Vicomte de Vérancour was a fine specimen of his kind of what he called his "order." He really was allied to whatever was noblest, not only in his department, but as far away as that magnificent temple whereof they of the Parisian Faubourg St. Germain are the high priests. He was very poor, had been obliged to educate poorly, and had condemned to many privations, his two daughters, whom he dearly loved; but he looked upon his poverty as a distinction, and thought it was his duty to behave as he did, and that it was incumbent upon him at any cost to be what he called "true to his name."

The château at D—— might, ages ago, have been an agreeable abode, when its possessors had wealth sufficient to procure what were the relative comforts and luxuries of the period, but it was a miserable place for two young women to inhabit in our day. Built, as are often baronial castles in the west of France, considerably below the village or town dependent upon it in days of yore, its first unavoidable evil was dampness, and want of air on all sides save one. It was decidedly unwholesome;—no one denied that. Then, although it was not large of its kind, it was much too large for its inhabitants, and they had to huddle themselves into holes and corners, where the torn and soiled furniture that had escaped the outrages of the past could be turned to the best use. Women, and more than any other French women, can contrive to make something out of nothing, and by the time the two Mesdemoiselles de Vérancour had been six months home from their convent at Poitiers, they really had converted the set of rooms appropriated to themselves and their father on the ground-floor into a presentable suite of chambers for a family of

reduced means. There was enough of discomfort, as we English people might think,—you habitually entered the house through the kitchen, and in the Vicomte's study you would be suddenly reminded by the fall of something soft and plump upon the floor of the presence of frogs; but resignation was the virtue of this family, and it was thought the right thing to submit to everything for the sake of ——what it might puzzle you or me to specify distinctly, but they knew, and were satisfied with their own magnanimity.

I have said that there was one side of the château which was open to the winds of heaven, and on that side a tolerably broad terrace planted with acacias, lime and nut trees, delightfully cool and shady in summer, was the open air boudoir of the two sisters, Félicie and Geneviève, or Vévette, as she was by abbreviation usually called. This had originally formed part of the castle ramparts, and had been one of the outworks meant to defend the town and fortress of D—— against any inroad on the part of the Bretons. If you crossed over the broad stone parapet on one side, you could see down straight into a well-kept lane which led round the castle premises up to the town, and branched off about half a league lower down from the high road to Cholet.

It was a bright beautiful October afternoon, a few days after the Vicomte's visit to Martin Prévost. The two sisters were sitting at the stone table at the end of the terrace. Baskets full of work and working materials were before them. The trees overhead were rich in their russet clothing, there was not a breath of wind stirring, and the warm soft sunlight flooded the meadows and pasture lands that spread out in front, and beyond the limit of the château's present domains.

"Is that the Angelus already?" asked Félicie, listening to the bell of the parish church of D—— ringing out six o'clock. "Is Monsieur le Curé coming to supper to-night?"

"I think not," was the reply.

In the provinces, and where the womankind of such families as these come together, it is impossible that a quarter of an hour should elapse without mention being made of a curé.

"Then suppose we look at the Monde Illustré," observed Félicie, drawing from the bottom of the large work-basket, where they lay hidden, two or three back numbers of an illustrated journal which a cousin, living at Tours, a lady of a worldly turn of mind, was in the habit of sending now and then to the two girls. "What is the matter, Vévette; what are you dreaming of?" she added, looking at her sister, who, with her work laid down upon her knee, was apparently gazing at vacancy, whilst the tears were gathering in her eyes.

"I was thinking of la mère Marie-Claire," said Vévette gently; "the sound of the Angelus suddenly reminded me of her, and of our convent days."

"La mère Marie-Claire was so devotedly fond of you, that it is no wonder you loved her, and regret her now she's dead," rejoined Félicie, with a rather sententious air, "but, for a well-born woman, I must say, Vévette, that a worse example can hardly be conceived than the one she gave."

"Do you really think that, sister?" inquired the younger girl, timidly, adding with a sigh: "Poor dear, sweet mère Marie-Claire! how lovely she was! and how like an angel she looked in the last few months of her life!"

"Vévette!" retorted the elder sister, with all the sternness so handsome a "saint" could command; "pray do not misapply terms. Mère Marie-Claire, who, I grieve to say, was distantly related to mamma, may have been a person to be pitied, and we will hope she is forgiven. Monsieur le Curé says it *is* allowable to pray for her. But she was assuredly no angel, and a more rebellious woman cannot be imagined. Why, she actually died of it! What made her take the veil, pray, if not that she preferred being a nun to marrying the man her parents had chosen for her?"

"But she said she could not love him," argued humbly Vévette.

Félicie curled her lips proudly. "What has a well-born, piously brought up girl to do with such reasonings as that?" she exclaimed. "The real fact is even worse than what I said just now; the real fact is, that the misguided woman took the veil because she could not marry the man she pretended she loved."

"But he was her equal. I believe he was her own cousin," urged Vévette, blushing deeply at her audacity.

"Equal, maybe," rejoined Félicie, "but they had no money between them, and the parents would not hear of it. No! mère Marie-Claire I hope repented of her errors, but in plain terms it cannot be denied that she positively died for love."

"And really, Félicie," murmured her sister tremblingly, after a pause of a few seconds, "do you think that it is so very dreadful a crime?"

"Think?" retorted the other. "Oh, Vévette! mère Marie-Claire committed a greater sin than I could have thought her capable of, if in her long talks with you she put such improper ideas into your head. I hope you have confessed all this to Monsieur le Curé."

"I will," promised poor Vévette, turning her head; "but I don't know that I ever thought of it all so much before. I don't know why I suddenly seemed to remember poor mère Marie-Claire so well. It must have been the Angelus. Do you remember the sound of our bell at the Visitation?"

"No indeed, my dear," answered Félicie with a smile, and unfolding her newspapers. "Just look," she cried; "here is the whole account of the Fêtes of the 15th August."

"But that's six weeks ago," objected Vévette.

"No matter; such things are always fresh. There was a grand

ball at the Hotel de Ville, and here is a long description of all the dresses." And Félicie's eye ran eagerly down the column, and she occasionally stopped to chronicle her admiration of some special toilet. "Oh, this must have been lovely!" she all at once exclaimed; "listen! pink crape with water-lilies; and the coiffure, water-lilies with pearls plaited into the hair. I wonder who wore that? I wonder if she was beautiful? When I am married, I shall enjoy a few weeks in Paris in the winter——"

"Félicie!"

"Why not? It is the right thing to do. Of course I should not go to the Hotel de Ville balls,—though I believe now, there are some people who do; but our relations and Monsieur de Champmorin's too, in the Faubourg St. Germain, give magnificent fêtes."

"And you will go to Paris, sister?" asked Vévette. "I should be frightened out of my senses if I only set my foot in one of its streets. Why, it is worse than Babylon!"

"Possibly," replied the other demurely; "but when a well-born woman is married she owes a great deal to her name and position in the world, and to her husband and his family. She must make sacrifices every day. All Monsieur de Champmorin's family live more or less in Paris, and I believe his uncle wishes him to be a Deputy. I must think of him, and of the future position of our children."

It was not in Vévette's gentle heart to retaliate, but in her heart she questioned whether Félicie ought not also to betake herself to confession, and submit to Monsieur le Curé her strange mental preoccupations touching pink crape dresses, and head-dresses composed of water-lilies and pearls interwoven in the hair. Vévette rose from her seat, and leant over the wall of the old rampart.

"Good evening, mademoiselle," drawled out a languid voice from the road beneath.

"Félicie," said Vévette, turning round, "it is Monsieur Richard. He has got little Charlot behind him with a basket full of fish."

Félicie joined her sister, and with condescending grace looked down on Monsieur Richard. He lifted up the green leaves in the basket, and discovered a fine fat carp.

"That is a good big fish," he remarked carelessly; "the rest are not worth much;" and then deferentially raising his broad-brimmed felt hat, made his request. "Would it be too great presumption," he asked, "if I requested the favour of presenting my personal respects to Monsieur le Vicomte some day soon, before leaving D——?"

"Dear me! Monsieur Richard," rejoined Félicie, "are you about to leave D——? Has Monsieur vôtre oncle obtained some Government situation for you?"

"Not that," was the answer, "but my uncle is kind enough to think that at three-and-twenty it is well to see something of the world, and I am going to Paris for some months."

"To Paris!" ejaculated both the sisters at once. "Will you not be dreadfully lonely without any friends or acquaintances? In such a place as Paris, what will you do with yourself?"

"Well," retorted the young man, "I do not think anybody with plenty of money to spend is likely to remain long lonely in Paris, and my uncle has been very generous to me."

"Indeed," said Félicie. "Well, I am sure I wish you success, Monsieur Richard. Any day before breakfast you can come to the château. I daresay papa will receive you. Bon soir."

The day was waning, and the two girls gathered up their work, Vévette carrying the basket.

"The idea of that old Prévost sending his nephew to Paris!" remarked Félicie. "I wonder what will become of him!"

"But you know, don't you, that he is to be enormously rich?" remarked Vévette.

"What they call rich," added scornfully her sister.

"What any one would call rich," urged Vévette. "Why, Félicie, they say old Prévost has above a hundred thousand francs a year, and he will leave every penny to Monsieur Richard. You'll see he'll marry one of the daughters of those nouveaux riches, and buy all D—— one of these fine days."

"A hundred thousand francs a year," repeated musingly Félicie, as they prepared to enter the house. "He'll give his wife diamonds and run horses at the races." And then she sighed, and said devoutly, "What a horrible state of things!"

CHAPTER IV.

MARTIN PRÉVOST'S AMBITION.

A WEEK passed by. It was the 12th of October. Old Prévost had called his nephew into his room, and there the two sat together, on either side of the long bureau-table, while the legendary "caisse de sureté" raised its cumbrous shape between the two windows, right in front of Monsieur Richard, whilst his uncle sat with his back towards it.

There was no resemblance between them;—not one single trait in common had they. The uncle's hard, sharp, vulture-like features were not reproduced in the rather weak mould in which those of the nephew had been cast. The old man's thin lips were very different from the full, red, sensual mouth of the young man opposite to him, and his piercing eyes utterly outshone Monsieur Richard's mild blue ones, with their rather vague, wandering glances. One thing was a pity; Monsieur Richard's eyelids were delicate, and every now and then got inflamed, which took from the pleasantness of his aspect, for he really was otherwise what may be termed good-looking. There was, if you will, a certain dulness in his air; I won't say that

he looked exactly stupid, but there was a total absence of light about him. You would swear that if he had been in the place of any of his elders of the Prévost stock, he would never have known how to make the fortunes they had made. No; stiff, sharp old Martin Prévost, as he sat there, straight-backed and all of a piece, was the evident superior of that fair-haired, round-faced, delicate young man. But then this is a degenerate age, and the money having been made by wiser, stronger men, it was enough that the mediocre but truly amiable inheritor of it all should make a good use of it;—and that Monsieur Richard undoubtedly would do.

"Now that I have given you most of the necessary details about your stay in Paris, and the principal friends you will find there," said old Prévost, continuing a conversation begun some half an hour before, "it is necessary that I should inform you of what my plans for your future are."

"Any that you form I shall follow," replied the nephew with a bow.

"Yes," answered the old man as blandly as it lay in his nature to do. "I have never had any complaint to make of you, Richard; you have always been obedient and well-conducted; and though you have no turn for affairs, I consider you thoroughly capable of doing credit to the position I have achieved. You start from where I leave off, Richard. I remain a plodding plebeian. You must be a gentleman. You must complete yourself by marriage. I have told you ever since you were a boy of fifteen to look forward to that. I have told you to familiarise yourself with the people down at the château as much as you could. Well! why do you shake your head?"

"Because, dear uncle, I have tried, but they won't let me! They are familiar enough with me, for that matter, but it is the familiarity that is used towards an inferior."

"They don't know how rich you are," interrupted old Prévost.

Monsieur Richard shook his head again. "To say the whole truth," he added, "the Vicomte treats me like a lacquey."

"Bah!" broke out old Prévost with a fierce bitterness of contempt, "they would marry a lacquey if he only brought them money enough. I tell you, nephew, you shall be Monsieur le Vicomte's son-in-law. I am in treaty now for the domain of Châteaubréville down in the Mayenne, and before the year is out you shall be Monsieur Prévost de Châteaubréville, and your noble spouse,"—this was said with a sneer,—"shall do the honours of your house to the whole department. I do not destine you to be a Deputy, Richard. I mean to keep that for myself," and the old man looked as he spoke capable of sterner efforts than are required to compel the attention of the Corps Législatif. "I will be the Deputy, you shall be of the Conseil-Général. Who knows? President of it, perhaps. Money will do anything! And I will carry through the direct line of railway from Paris. When once we've got that,—besides

the new coal-fields,—it shall be my fault if any of the new men in Paris,—were it even the Péreires themselves,—are richer than me. But the first thing is your marriage."

Monsieur Richard's eyes had been actually flashing light all this while, as he listened to his uncle's words. He knew old Prévost's indisputable capacity, and knew also how small men had made enormous fortunes; and at the concluding phrase he blushed all over with delight.

"If it were possible, dear uncle," he exclaimed, "it would indeed be a brilliant dream, for——"

"Probably," interrupted the old man, "you've gone and formed some inclination, as people call it, for that scornful princess; that is of no sort of consequence;" and he waved his hand, as if setting aside all such nonsense; "but there is no harm in it. What is important is that I hold those Vérancours in my hand, and that on the day after to-morrow, on Thursday, at two o'clock, I shall put my signature side by side with Monsieur le Vicomte's to an act that will make him my dependent. He has sold me Les Grandes Bruyères. I have had all the acts and contracts made out. I pay him the money at two o'clock on Thursday next; but an hour after that, I wouldn't advise Monsieur le Vicomte to play me any tricks, because I can destroy with one word the entire combination for which he wants the cash."

"You know I never question you, uncle," said Monsieur Richard; but he looked all interrogation.

"No; you are exceedingly discreet," replied old Prévost, "and as the whole concerns you, I will trust you.—The Vicomte must have sixty thousand francs, or Champmorin won't marry the girl. I give him seventy thousand, and the marriage takes place. But by this proceeding he defrauds the other sister, for he has literally not a farthing left to give her. The château won't sell for twenty thousand francs; and if I show the real state of the case to Champmorin's notary, the business is done. Champmorin will withdraw, for he would have to refund,—besides all the éclat of the matter; and then Monsieur le Vicomte would have both his daughters upon his hands, and be minus the only bit of tolerable property he had to dispose of."

"But, uncle!" stammered the young man, upon whose countenance there had gathered all this while a cloud of anxiety that his interlocutor did not notice. "Uncle, I knew nothing of all this! Which of the sisters is going to be married?"

"Which?" echoed old Prévost, impatiently. "Why Mademoiselle Félicie, to be sure; who else should it be? With whom are we concerned, if not with Vévette?"

His nephew gasped, and, for a moment or two, could not speak.

"Why, what ails the boy?" exclaimed old Prévost, transfixing the unhappy Monsieur Richard with a look that was full of the bitterest contempt. "You haven't been offering your hand, have you, to Monsieur de Champmorin's charming bride; to that ——?" Here he stopped short,

and no epithet came, but the expression of his countenance was not complimentary to Mademoiselle Félicie. "Richard!" he resumed, in a very calm tone, "you will do well to listen to what I say: *I* have decided that Mademoiselle Geneviève shall be your wife, and on that condition I have told you what a position you shall enjoy; but if any obstacle to that arrangement were to come from you, I would immediately alter my will, and instead of being a rich man and a personagé one of these days, you should find yourself all at once in the position of my grandfather when he began life. I would not leave you one centime."

Poor Monsieur Richard was pale as death, and seemed as though he were internally convulsed. Externally he trembled a little.

"Uncle," said he in an unsteady voice, "you never told me that you preferred one of the sisters to the other, and——"

"Told you!" echoed old Prévost; "why should I go explaining my intentions to you, before the time was come to act?"

"But, dear uncle," pleaded Monsieur Richard, "it was not my fault if——"

"Who cares whether it is your fault or not?" retorted Martin Prévost. "One thing be well assured of, that while I live Mademoiselle Félicie shall never be my niece. You idiot!" he added; "it is so like the wretched weaklings of your kind, the miserable products of this sensual age, to be attracted by a girl of that description. Why, you would not have been her husband half a year before you would be coming here to me whining and crying to be delivered from her! I know that young lady, though she doesn't yet know herself. I knew her grandmother, Monsieur le Vicomte's blessed mother, and that girl is every inch Madame Dorothée;—la belle Madame Dorothée! Yes, handsome she was, God knows, and some few are living who remember what she was besides;—all of which didn't prevent her going to mass every day of her life, and to confession twice a month,—for she was by way of being a dévote, too,—though devotion was easier to manage thirty or forty years ago than it is now, since the reign of the Jesuits in France."

"But, uncle," ventured to say the unhappy youth, "Mademoiselle Félicie is not yet nineteen, and has only been a year out of a convent. She cannot yet——"

"Nonsense!" interrupted old Prévost; "hold your tongue, Richard, about the whole thing. It shall not be. And now, as this topic must never be reverted to, I will just once for all speak my mind to you, and you will reflect upon what I say, and see if you can agree. You are like all the men of your time. They call themselves men." This was uttered with an indescribable sneer. "You are dishonest." The nephew started. "I don't mean that you would steal; but you won't pay. You want to enjoy, to enjoy always, without doing anything else, and you want to escape paying for it; that's what I

call dishonest, and that is the characteristic of you all. The men of my time worked and paid its full price for whatever they achieved. Look at me; I've worked for forty years,—worked hard, and plodded not only through work, but through privations and through humiliations. Do you suppose I should ever have been as wealthy as I am if they who have helped to enrich me had dreamt I was ambitious? No! I have been scrupulously honest according to the present value of the word, but I have profited by the weaknesses of my neighbours, and I should never have known them if I had been thought of as anything save 'le bon homme Prévost.' Wealth! power even! they don't mind that, so long as they fancy you can never use it to trouble their vanity. I ambitious! Bless my soul! I was only a money-getting machine, a humble, narrow-minded bourgeois, who knew nothing of politics, but only put sou upon sou and helped his betters out of difficulties by lending them the sums they couldn't get elsewhere! I, 'le bon homme Prévost!' Lord bless you, I didn't exist! But now, my time is come, too, and I will have my enjoyment, for I have paid for it."

"And no one will be so rejoiced at your success as I shall be," put in the nephew cautiously.

"I am only sixty-two," continued Martin Prévost, careless of the interruption. "I have the strength of unspent years in store, for I have capitalised my health, as well as my money. I have fifteen years before me, during which I will have my enjoyment. I shall remain, as I told you, a plodding plebeian, but I will plod to some purpose, and on a higher field than I have had yet. There is the good of the empire; the forces from below come into play now, and the forces from above are annihilated, though they don't see it. They get the titles, and crosses, and Chamberlain's keys, and their vanity is content; they have nothing else; but we of the lower ranks get the power. Now you see, Richard, I will make a gentleman of you, and you shall represent something. But I will rule your fortunes, and will not have for my niece a woman who would try to rule me."

Monsieur Richard permitted himself a vehement gesture of dénégation.

"Stuff!" said the uncle, sternly. "Mademoiselle Félicie was just the sort of girl to seize hold of a weak and vicious imagination. Don't be offended, Richard! The imaginations of the young men of your age now-a-days are all vicious, because the men are all weak;—all half-natures! But that is no matter. Mademoiselle Félicie will be Madame de Champmorin in six weeks, and when I have paid the money down for Les Grandes Bruyères, the Vicomte, in spite of his pride, will not refuse me Mademoiselle Vévette, who is really an excellent girl, and manageable. When you come back from Paris, Monsieur Prévost de Chateaubréville, you shall marry her, and when you are somewhat over forty you will inherit all my wealth, be a personage, I tell you

again, and marry your own daughters to penniless marquises or even dukes, if you choose."

"Oh! uncle, uncle!" sighed his nephew.

The countenance of old Prévost underwent a slight change. Looking steadfastly at Monsieur Richard,—looking at him, as it were, through and through, he said,—"I'll tell you what you think would be just and proper. You think that because you are young you ought to be able to satisfy all your desires; you would like to have the position I can give you, and the woman you choose to fancy, besides; you would like my earnings and your own will. No, no, Richard, you must pay too; you must pay by submission and by patience! After to-morrow Mademoiselle Félicie will be out of your reach. You must make up your mind to it. You will have the estate of Chateaubréville, and a Demoiselle de Vérancour for the mother of your children, who will be very rich; and what have you done for all that?" and he took in the whole of his nephew, as it were, at one glance, and said, scornfully, "Nothing!"

Poor Monsieur Richard! He shrunk together, and attempted no further resistance. It might be very painful, but, as Mephisto says, "He was neither the first, nor would he be the last." This same conversation has been gone through, or will be gone through, by more or less every son and every nephew in France; therefore the hardship is after all a common one.

When the conversation was ended, poor Monsieur Richard begged his uncle's pardon for having dreamt of thwarting him, and promised he would do his best to get over his disappointment and accept his uncle's plans for him with fitting readiness and gratitude. Poor young man! The traces of the struggle were visible on his face, by its increased pallor, by the redness of his eyelids, and by a circle of dark blue that had hollowed itself under his eyes.

All was over. Monsieur Richard was to leave for Paris in a week, and next Thursday Mademoiselle Félicie was to be in possession of a dot that would enable her to become Madame de Champmorin.

But Destiny sometimes foils even the best calculators. When Thursday came, old Martin Prévost was lying at the foot of his great big iron safe, his face upon the floor, his two arms stretched out before him, and the back of his head beaten in by blows. The master of the strong box was murdered, the strong box was broken open, and all the ready money in bank notes and cash had disappeared. There had been what we call burglary, and what the French law terms "vol avec effraction."

THE ETHICS OF TRADES' UNIONS.

When once a name becomes the subject of embittered political, and still more, of social controversy, it ceases to convey the impression it was originally intended to produce. Thus, a "trade's union" has long become the symbol, as it were, for systems and objects which, whether meritorious or otherwise, are entirely foreign to the original signification of the name. In the opinion of the large and influential class which looks at the subject exclusively from the capitalist's point of view, trades' unions are simply organised conspiracies against freedom of labour and the rights of capital; in the judgment of the working men themselves, and of that small, though not uninfluential, section of the public whose most outspoken advocate is Professor Beesly, these unions are organisations for the protection of the operative, for the defence of the just rights of labour against the oppression of capital. Holding neither of these views ourselves, we think we may do some service if we try to explain how the trade union question is regarded by men who neither dread nor worship the working classes, who believe that capitalists and operatives are equally desirous of promoting their own real or supposed interests, equally indifferent as to how the promotion of their own interests may affect those of others. In order to make our view intelligible we must first endeavour to explain the terms of the social problem with which the community has now to deal.

In its primary signification, a trade's union is neither more nor less than a voluntary association of men engaged in the same trade for mutual assistance and protection. It is, in fact, a mutual benefit society, such as exists in all countries, and among all classes of workmen, wherever the status of the working man has risen above that of the mere hind or serf. In all our agricultural districts, where the principle of co-operation for mutual defence is still practically unknown, these benefit societies flourish under the patronage of the clergy and gentry. Their chief functions are to provide medical assistance for their members when in sickness, to secure them a decent burial, and to give them a pretext for certain periodical festivities, at which a very large proportion of the funds of the association are spent on beer and banners. In fact, in a very humble and unsatisfactory manner these primitive rural trades' unions fulfil the same functions for the agricultural labourer as masonic lodges do for the wealthier classes. Without doubt, as education spreads, these associations will try to exercise an influence on the relations between rustic employers and labourers. When they do so, the only

certain result we can predict is, that their club feasts will no longer be held on the grounds of the Hall or Parsonage—will not, as at present, be assisted by the subscriptions of the farmers of the neighbourhood.

But though in towns and in manufacturing districts the "beneficent aspect," if we may coin such a term, has long ceased to be the most important one of trades' unions as institutions, they still retain a good deal of their original character, and, in virtue of such character, have a strong hold upon the affections, even of working men who disapprove of their policy in questions of capital and labour. It would, indeed, be eminently discreditable to the class if it were otherwise. No great amount of imaginative faculty is required to realise in some degree the sentiments which lead the mechanic or factory hand to associate himself with his fellows in some sort of society for mutual relief and assistance. The normal uncertainties of life, fluctuations of fortune, and vicissitudes of health, press with unusual severity, and even cruelty, on men who have to work literally, as well as generally, for their daily bread. In a certain sense, any man who has not a fixed income, independent of his own exertions, has to work for his daily livelihood. But the sense is a very different one from that in which the same remark may be predicated with regard to the handicraftsman. To almost all men raised above what are technically called the working classes, absolute, immediate want of food, or difficulty in providing for the wants of the ensuing week, or month, or year, are not among the ordinary casualties of existence. Most of us have certain funds laid by, or have good-wills, connections, stock-in-trade, on which, if employment fails us, we can raise temporary supplies, or, at the worst event, we have friends who will guard us against positive penury. But to the ordinary operative the possibility of being any day reduced to want must be constantly present. Causes over which he has no direct control—a commercial crisis, a falling off in the consumption of the article he is occupied in producing, the extravagance of his employers, or, above all, sudden sickness, may place him and his children, almost without notice, in a condition of distress, if not of misery. We are speaking now of what is, not of what ought to be. The working man has few savings; his hands are his sole stock-in-trade; his week's wages his sole capital; and if, from any cause, these fail him, he has nothing before him except the scant and bitter mercies of parish relief or casual charity. There is no good in inquiring here whether the condition of the working classes is not capable of improvement. We are dealing now with facts as we find them; and the facts being what they are, we say, without hesitation, that trades' unions, in their aspect of benefit societies, are a necessity for our working men,—institutions which, if they did not exist, must be invented to supply an imperative want. By the weekly subscriptions paid to these associations a fund

is raised, by means of which men out of work, through sickness or unavoidable calamity, are kept from the workhouse, and receive relief with no diminution of their self-respect. We would go further than this, and say that the feeling which prompts thousands of workmen, who, from superior prudence or ability, have no great idea of ever coming upon the union themselves, to still contribute out of their hard-earned wages to its funds, is, in itself, a very noble one. It is well men in any class should feel that they have obligations towards their weaker and less prosperous colleagues, and it might be better for society if classes higher placed in the social scale had an equally strong sense with the operative population, that they are bound to share each other's burdens.

It is easy to see how these organisations exercise, even without desiring it, a strong social influence upon their members. Every such body, by virtue of its existence, imposes a certain code of unwritten as well as written laws upon persons connected with it; and this code, though not perhaps a very elevated one in itself, serves to raise the average tone of the community. Every man who belongs to a club, whether that club is held in Pall Mall or in a pot-house, is compelled to show some deference to the opinions of his fellow-members. However vicious or corrupt his natural inclinations are, he thinks twice before he commits any outrage on moral or social laws which will subject him to the censure of the association to which he belongs. No doubt this influence may be exerted for evil as well as for good; men may grow to acknowledge no standards of right or wrong except those recognised by their own community, may learn to think the interests of that association paramount to every other consideration. This seems to have been the case at Sheffield; but in the elementary stage of trades' unions it is rarely, if ever, the case. That the members of a craft should stand by each other—that they should help each other in distress, and promote the general good of the craft, even at more or less of individual advantage—these may be said to be the fundamental maxims of all trades' unions; and, though capable of misapplication, they are most assuredly not evil in themselves. Probably the most perfect specimen of a trade's union in what we may call the non-aggressive phase of development, is to be found in the the association of solicitors, known as the Incorporated Law Society. Every attorney with any claim to respectability belongs to this body, which exercises a sort of lax control over the conduct of its members. Its avowed object is to keep up the character of the legal community, and any gross breach of recognised legal morality or etiquette is visited with expulsion from the association. No legal penalties of any kind are attached to the jurisdiction of this self-constituted tribunal; but still the expression of collective opinion conveyed by its censure exercises, in as far as it goes, a very wholesome influence upon the members—if they will excuse our so describing them—of

the law-mongering trade. Now even the most inveterate enemy of trades' unions would admit that if the sole influence exercised by these bodies was, as in the instance alluded to, of a moral character, there would be little to be urged against them. The *gravamen* of the charge under which they labour consists in the perfectly correct assumption that they use their influence for undesirable ends, and support it by unjustifiable means.

If we are to allow trades' unions at all, it is absurd to suppose they will not, in course of time, occupy themselves with questions concerning the relations between workmen and their employers. Even supposing that all such organisations were founded with the sole object of affording mutual assistance in cases of distress, it would be impossible that they should leave out of sight all consideration of the causes which lead to this distress. A member of an union is out of work and applies to the society for assistance. He admits—a fact patent to his fellow-members—that he *could* get work, but alleges that the wages offered him are insufficient, or that his employer insists on conditions he considers unjust to himself and to his mates. The union must obviously decide whether his reasons for refusing work are adequate to justify his consequent application for support from the pockets of his brother operatives. Again, a number of the assurers —for the members of a trade's union are nothing but mutual assurers —declare that certain practices on the part either of employers or of fellow-workmen are calculated to throw them out of employment, and thus to bring them upon the support of the society. Under such circumstances the union is not only entitled, but bound, to consider whether the practices in question really do produce the alleged result; and, if so, whether they should not be discouraged by such influences as the body can lawfully bring to bear upon its affiliated members. Thus it may easily be seen that, as soon as the members of a trade's union become sufficiently intelligent to conduct their affairs for themselves, they must necessarily form some sort of code for the regulation of the relations of the members to each other and to the purveyors of labour. In itself there is no more injustice in this than there is in the members of a Mutual Assurance Society declaring that a policy shall be vitiated by residence abroad, or that an extra premium should be charged to assurers who engage in pursuits attended with peril to life or health. When a man joins an insurance society, he consents to forego some part of the advantages he might attain if he laid by his premiums yearly and attained to a ripe age, in consideration of the advantage his family will reap if he dies early. In the same way, every man who agrees to join a trade's union, or any other co-operative association, knows that he sacrifices some portion of what he might gain if he remained independent and proved successful, in consideration of what he is to receive in case he does not succeed by his unassisted efforts.

Unfortunately it is impossible that questions concerning labour

should be discussed with the same calm judgment as questions relating solely to pecuniary speculations. It is not reasonable to expect that men should be wise, or generous, or just, in matters bearing on their own daily bread. When we condemn artisans for their greed and selfishness, we should in fairness remember the temptations under which they labour. We are all acquainted with the intense feelings of animosity entertained by members of his own profession towards any professional man who does anything to lower the remuneration of his craft; but, after all, if a barrister takes briefs directly from a client without the intervention of an attorney, or a doctor advertises that his fee is only half-a-crown a visit, or a solicitor undertakes to accept three-and-fourpence for advice, it is only indirectly and slowly that he injures the prospects of his professional brethren; he does not imperil their morrow's dinner or cut off the money for next week's rent. But any alteration in the price of wages comes home to the working man with a force and promptitude of which we are apt to lose sight. To the hundreds of thousands whose wages vary from fifteen to thirty shillings a week, a shilling less means no butter with the dry bread, or no meat for the Sunday's dinner, or no comforts for home, or no new clothes for children in rags, or no beer during the long day's toil, no pipe after work is over; it means the loss of some necessary of existence, or the deprivation of some of the luxuries of a life not too rich in pleasure. This truth ought surely to be remembered. No sensible man would assert that, because a fall in wages means want, and pinching, and distress, if not positive misery, to the working man, that, therefore, he has a right to "ratten" any one whose conduct he opines, rightly or wrongly, to be conducive to this fall; but we may allow, without morbid sentimentalism, that "rattening" would bear a somewhat different aspect in our eyes if we ourselves had to support a wife and family on a few shillings a week, and believed that a certain amount of coercion would hinder that pittance from being taken from us. The truth we desire to impress is illustrated by the old saying, that there is no arguing with an empty belly.

Thus we may take for granted, whether we like it or not, that trades' unions will concern themselves with all questions affecting the rates of wages, and that they will necessarily bring to the consideration a bias inconsistent with philosophical impartiality. Moreover, quite apart from their private interests, the theory on which all their actions are based is one which is not acknowledged, and, indeed, is hardly understood by the governing classes in this country. Our institutions, our social and political and national life, are substantially grounded on the dogma of free competition,—that is, upon the doctrine that the good of the community is promoted, on the whole, by allowing every individual member to seek his own advantage and try to underbid others, so long as he achieves his ends by legal methods. We have

learnt to regard this dogma as an axiom, and we resent any denial of its universal truth, as we should any assumption that two and two could, in any case, make five. But the working classes in England, and still more on the Continent, have never accepted this cardinal tenet of our politico-economical faith. Their theory, as far as they can express it articulately, is, that the good of the individual is, on the whole, promoted by preferring the corporate advantage of the class to that of each single unit. To take a very simple illustration. If there was a certain work to be done, for which a hundred pounds were to be paid in wages and a hundred men wanted employment, the ordinary operative would hold it was much better that every one of the hundred should receive his pound than that ten, by extra skill and energy, should each earn two pounds, and the ninety others should in consequence receive only some seventeen shillings and ninepence odd. We do not agree with the conclusion, but we would observe that it is held by many thousands of operatives whose own personal interests would lead them to desire unrestricted competition. In fact, there exists among mechanics a sort of solidarity,—to adopt a French phrase,—not found in other classes. The ambition to rise above their order is not, we think, very common amongst them. They are not—if, in these days, it is permitted to speak the truth about our artisans—a frugal or a prudent body of men. They work hard while they are about their work, labour as few hours as they can, eat and drink freely whenever they have the means, and are tolerably well contented so long as they can see the week's work and the week's wages provided for beforehand. We do not deny for one moment that there are numerous exceptions to the class as we have described it; but, roughly speaking, we believe this description to be a just one; and while it remains so, it can well be understood how to the ordinary working man it seems far more important to secure average comfort for his class than to obtain exceptional advantages for those who have more energy or ambition than their fellows.

And we are by no means prepared to say that trades' unions do not in some measure improve the average condition of the operative classes. No individual or class ever had unlimited power without abusing it; and if there were no unions the power of the capitalist over the working men would be well-nigh unlimited. What conceivable means of resistance would any single mechanic have if the manufacturer could say to him, "If you will not work on my terms, I can find a score who will?" But at present any single mechanic, however insignificant, can and does say to his employer, "If your terms are such as in the judgment of my fellow workmen are not fair, not only I will not do your work, but every member of the trade who belongs to my union will refuse to work also." The power of the unions may be, and has been, abused; but it is one that cannot well be dispensed with in any country where the demand for labour

is not greater than the supply. Practically the trades—we refer of course to those which require no great amount of skill—in which workmen are most independent and prosperous are those in which unions flourish, and this fact alone should make us hesitate before we condemn them utterly.

Holding these views, we should look with no ill favour on trades' unions, if they confined their interference with freedom of labour to their own body. It may be very undesirable that a workman should only be allowed to have a fixed number of apprentices, or should be debarred from working more than a stated number of hours, that he should be at liberty to do only certain kinds of work, that he should be subject, in short, to any one of the hundred restrictions which an union imposes on its members, with the view of maintaining a certain average rate of wages. But so long as the workman enters the association freely, and is only deterred from leaving it through fear of losing the advantages, practical or sentimental, of membership, it is not easy to see what ground there is for objection. If labour is free—if there is no moral law compelling men to do the maximum of work for the minimum of wages—any number of men have a right to determine the conditions under which they will give their services. The conditions may be foolish, but the right to make them is unquestionable. In the same way, we do not see how the right of the unions to dictate terms to the capitalist can be disputed, so long as the dictation is confined to a declaration, that non-compliance will be followed by the members of the union declining to work for him. Nothing can well be sillier than the arguments so solemnly put forward in authoritative journals, that workmen are committing an act of moral enormity in continuing to raise the price of labour, because the result of such combinations is supposed to be the gradual removal of certain branches of manufacture from England to the Continent. Of course, if the workmen *cannot* get higher wages by combination, the hypothetical enormity vanishes. If they *can* succeed in so doing, the reproach addressed to them amounts to this, that for the sake of benefiting the general prosperity of England, or of doing good to unborn generations of workmen who may choose to embrace their peculiar handicraft, they are to work say for a pound a-week when they could get a guinea for their labour,—that is, they are to sacrifice five per cent. of their income as a matter of duty, not even of patriotism or generosity.

In all moral questions it is not very hard to say generally, that some things are right and others are wrong; but it is well-nigh impossible to define exactly where the right ends or the wrong begins. Everybody, with the exception of a few fanatics on either side, would admit on the one hand that working men are justified in combining, and on the other are not justified in coercing. But when this postulate is granted, it is not at all easy to draw the line between

combination and coercion. For in almost every trade there is a large class of workmen who do not belong to unions. In the majority of instances the non-unionists are the inferior, the less successful, and the less provident class of workmen. It may be a fact to be deplored, but it is a fact, that intelligent, hard-working, and respectable mechanics do, as a rule, belong to the unions of their trades. It follows from this circumstance that the unionists consider themselves superior to the non-unionists, not altogether without just reason. Now, as we have before stated, the one agency through which these operative organisations can exert influence is through combined action. Hence, workmen who either do not belong to the union of their trade, or who refuse to accede to the resolutions decided on by the majority of the body, are the natural foes of unionism. If the United Tailors determine to strike, and there are a sufficient number of unaffiliated tailors ready and able to supply their place and do their work, the sole result of the strike will be to throw the United Tailors upon the parish. Thus if we are to have strikes or combinations at all we must accept the logical consequence, that the men combining will exert their utmost efforts to induce all outsiders to join in the combination. Admitting this, and recollecting that the working classes as a body believe, however erroneously, that combination is essential to the welfare if not the existence of their body, we can understand how they have come to consider coercion justifiable. That they do so consider it, is we fear indubitable. Ordinary men seldom push their views, whether political or theological, to their logical issue. Happily for humanity, Broadheads are rare in any class or age. But the principle on which the Sheffield unions acted is one which theoretically, we suspect, commends itself to the judgment of the working class. There are thousands of respectable Englishmen, who hold doctrines which would command the forcible conversion of Papists by fire and stake, and who yet would shrink with horror from the notion of seeing a human being tortured. And so we hope and trust that the vast majority of English mechanics would repel with indignation the notion that they could take part in blowing up and shooting fellow-workmen, who declined to obey the rules of the union. But we entertain no doubt that they would also hold that the recalcitrant workmen ought to be coerced for their own good. All the indignation meetings that have been held to repudiate complicity with Sheffield have protested against Broadhead's crimes, not against his principles; and we feel a strong conviction that no assemblage of bonâ fide English working men would honestly pass a resolution to the effect that any interference with the freedom of the individual workman was wrong and unjust in itself. After Baron Bramwell's charge, the working tailors will probably admit that the system of picketing is illegal, but very few, if any, will agree with the learned judge's assumption that the system was morally unjustifiable.

Thus we have to deal with the following peculiar state of things. The great majority of workmen belong to unions, and this majority comprises the chief intelligence and respectability of the class. The creed of these unions, however erroneous, is, that combination is essential to the welfare of the body; and that, therefore, every method which promotes co-operation, promotes a good end, even if the method be objectionable in itself. Moreover, among a very large section of the operative class,—how large we should hesitate to say,—a conviction prevails, that of two evils it is far better to resort to direct coercion than to impair to any material degree the power of the agency which, in their opinion, constitutes the sole safeguard and protection of labour against capital.

Now, in this paper we do not wish to enter in any way on the question of the comparative merits or demerits of the employer's and the employé's views of the relation between labour and capital. All we desire is to point out in some measure the principle upon which society should deal with existing facts, whether regretable or otherwise. In an Utopian state it would, we think, be desirable not to have unions at all; and we should look with disfavour on every legislation tending to foster these organisations, which, even if justified by the circumstances of the time, are at the best a necessary evil. But, as practical men, living in a non-Utopian world, we can see no possibility of doing away with unions. Any attempts to suppress or even discountenance these associations by the force of law, would endear them more strongly to the working classes, and bestow upon them a vitality they do not now possess. In all human likelihood trades' unions will increase in numbers and influence with the gradual elevation of the class from which their constituents are derived; and under the extended suffrage introduced by the new Reform Bill, we may expect them to play an important part in politics. Under these circumstances, our solution of the problem with which the community has now to deal is, that trades' unions should be allowed every possible advantage and privilege that is accorded under our institutions to voluntary associations, while all attempts on their part to interfere with the liberty of the subject should be suppressed by the action of the law. We cordially agree with those persons who hold that the ends which these unions, as organisations for controlling the labour-market, have in view, are ends which it is undesirable to promote. But on the other hand, all such organisations, whether they proceed from masters or men, are equally objectionable in themselves. Nobody, for instance, could defend a "lock-out," except as a measure of self-defence. It is constantly the practice amongst employers, when they have entered on a dispute with their workmen, to discharge from their service men who have taken no part whatever in the dispute, simply and solely because by so doing an additional pressure is brought to bear on the original malcontents. Now we are

not prepared to say such a course of action may not be justified by the interests of the employers; but in itself it is as indefensible as any measure of legal coercion resorted to by the men. Unless, however, we are prepared to interfere with the liberty of the masters, we cannot contest their right to dismiss or engage whomsoever they please, on what terms they like; and in the same way, without interfering with the liberty of the men, we cannot curtail their right to work for whom they please, on whatsoever terms they think fit. Some years ago, within the knowledge of the writer, certain mining works were established in an agricultural district, where the wages of the labourers were, and we believe are, extremely low. The mining company offered wages somewhat above the current rates. Thereupon the farmers of the district met together and agreed amongst themselves that any labourer who accepted work at the mines should not have farm employment again, if he tried to obtain it. This resolution was made known, and in consequence the labourers were afraid to take work upon the mines. The speculation failed, owing in no small degree to the impossibility of getting labour from the neighbourhood, in consequence of this combination amongst the farmers; and the labourers were deprived of an opportunity of permanently bettering their condition. Now it is not easy to conceive a more selfish or arbitrary exercise of the power of combination; yet the coalition was perfectly legal, and the farmers legally, if not morally, were entitled to act as they did. Any attempt to lay down a law which could have prohibited such a coalition, would have been aimed at the free exercise of individual liberty. If the farmers of the district alluded to had had a deeper sense of what was due to others, or a keener insight into their own permanent, as opposed to their immediate, interests, they would have abstained from such an abuse of their legal rights. But beyond the gradual influence of education and enlightenment, no practical remedy can be suggested for similar abuses of their power, on the part of masters and employers.

According to the old proverb, what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander; and we hold that the same latitude of action, even to the extent of wrong-doing, must be granted to the men as well as accorded to the masters. In the case we have referred to, all the employers of labour in the district combined together with an unanimity which could not have been exceeded by that of any trade's union. But it is conceivable that some of the body, more enlightened or more dependent on their labourers than their fellows, should have refused to accede to this coalition, and declared their readiness to re-employ the miners if they sought again for farm work. If this had been the case, the dissentient minority would doubtless have been exposed to a good deal of annoyance. Every attempt would have been made to induce them to reconsider their determination; in case of continued refusal to join the league, they would have been called traitors to their order, accused of not standing by their class; excluded probably

from the farmers' club, and generally sent to Coventry. That they should be so treated for doing what they considered their duty or interest, and what they had a complete and absolute right to do, would have been very unfair and unjust; but for this moral "tort" there would have existed no legal remedy. Farmers have a right to send any of their body to Coventry, and to expose him to all the vexations which, rightly or wrongly, attend any departure from the orthodox opinions and practice of the class to which the offender belongs. Supposing, however, the farmers had gone further, and attempted to coerce the dissentient minority into compliance by acts of violence, such as burning their ricks or maiming their horses, or turning cattle into their standing crops, and had perpetrated these acts of oppression through the agency of a secret organisation, then they would have been justly subject to any penalties the law could enforce against them.

Now it appears to us that this example exactly illustrates the limits within which society should deal with coalitions either of capital or labour. It is, and ought to be, perfectly lawful for men to combine either to raise or to keep down wages. Whether in such particular instance they are justified morally in so doing, is a matter which their own conscience must be left to decide. If we adopt this principle, we must accept its logical and practical consequences. Granted that workmen have a right to coalesce in order to exert a combined pressure on their employers, they have clearly a right to use every inducement to lead fellow-workmen who dissent from their views to join their coalition. Like the farmers, whom we have spoken of, they have a right to call the dissentient minority traitors to their order, to employ any language of reproach that is not legally actionable, to make the non-unionist as uncomfortable, morally, as they can; to send him, in fact, to Coventry. In so doing the workmen may be, and we hold are, acting most selfishly and unjustifiably; but they are not infringing the principle which we think should dictate our legislation. It may be urged that this sort of moral coercion is opposed to the spirit, if not to the actual letter, of the law regulating the right of combination. Whether this be so or not is a legal question which we do not wish to discuss. Our object is to point out what ought to be, not what is at present, the principle of our legislation. If masters, as we hold, have a perfect right to say that they will not allow an unionist to obtain employment within their factories or workshops, we cannot see with what pretence of justice unionists can be denied the right of refusing to work for employers who take non-unionists into their pay.

If our theory be correct, the maxims laid down by Baron Bramwell in the recent trials at the Old Bailey can only be taken as expounding the bearing of the law as it stands. The system of picketing is one of which no candid person can approve, but if workmen are to have

the same perfect liberty of action as other English citizens, we can hardly see how they are to be debarred from adopting such a system if they think it conducive to their interests. After all, it is not unlawful for any man to walk up and down a certain thoroughfare; it is not unlawful to follow another man about the streets; it is not unlawful to look unpleasantly at anybody you dislike; and, as far as we are aware, it is not unlawful to call a man a coward or a traitor to his order. To do so may be very ill-bred, or ill-natured, or un-Christian, but it is not illegal for ordinary people; and we require some reason to show us why it should be illegal for working men. If anybody molests or annoys us in the streets, or in our homes, we can appeal to the police to protect us if we have just cause; and the persons annoyed or molested by the pickets had exactly the same means of redress open to them. Of course it may be urged that the fear of incurring ill-will, if not the dread of worse consequences, hindered the victims of these annoyances from appealing to the protection of the law. We have no doubt that this is so, but yet we can see no help for this miscarriage of justice. Work-people who wish to work for low wages have no more especial claim to protection than any other class of artisans. In all instances in which it could be proved that terrorism had been exerted, we would have the offence punished with the utmost severity; but the law is not bound to provide exceptional securities for persons who decline appealing to the law to protect them against their wrongs. If it could be shown that in any case, similar to those tried at the Old Bailey, unionist workmen had committed an outrage upon a non-unionist which would have been a criminal offence if committed by any ordinary person upon another, then the offenders should be punished, but not, we think, otherwise.

Following the same principle, we arrive, though with some regret, at the conclusion, that trades' unions have a fair claim to the same privileges as we accord to other associations of a similar kind. One of the chief complaints of the men is, that they are unfairly treated, because their unions are not allowed any legal status. No thinking man, probably, not even Professor Beesly himself, would propose to give the unions any legal power of coercion. But as long as their members enter upon their engagements freely and with full knowledge of what they are doing, we do not see why these societies should not have legal protection for their corporate property, and power, if necessary, to sue in the civil courts for the non-performance of any contract entered into between the association and its members. A club may prosecute its secretary and servants for embezzlement, and sue its members for arrears; and we would treat a trade's union just as an ordinary club. By so doing, we should indeed give a certain sanction and position to trades' unions which they do not at present possess; but, on the other hand, we should deprive them of the allegation of being in any way under the ban of the law; we should destroy their sole pretext for

secrecy, and we should place them on a footing in which they could be reached by the ordinary methods of justice.

In fact, if we have made our meaning clear, we would treat unions as we would any other voluntary associations formed for purposes not illegal in themselves, and unionists as we should any other men engaged in pursuits not of a criminal character. And by adopting this principle we should be able to treat their crimes exactly as we do common crimes. Murder, arson, or assault, when perpetrated by an unionist, should be visited with the same penalty as attaches to these offences in our statutes. If there were no exceptional disabilities as at present lying on workmen when combining together, there could be no possible plea for regarding their crimes as less heinous than those of other criminals. The more the subject is considered, the more we think it will be found that there are only two courses open to us in dealing with trades' unions—we may either suppress them as illegal and immoral, or we may allow them the same full and complete liberties as we allow to other voluntary associations; that is, we must allow them to do whatever they like, so long as they do not break the law in any way. No exceptional legislation is practically possible, and any one acquainted, in however slight a degree, with the working classes, must be aware that to put down the unions by force would be to risk a social insurrection. Our only wise course, therefore, is to deal with workmen associated in unions as we do with other subjects of the realm engaged in lawful pursuits, and in so doing we shall, we believe, not only act justly, but prudently.

THE PRESENT CONDITION AND PROSPECTS OF THE TURF.

It is a truth older than Aristotle,—although he is the first known to have enunciated it,—that if you seek to estimate the propagandist influence and assimilative force of an imperial nation, you must trace them in the imitation, not of laws, institutions, and polity, but of social tastes, fashions, and public amusements which that nation is able to induce. As regards dress, furniture, repasts, tastes, architecture, literature, theatrical diversions, and public pastimes, Spain unquestionably set the fashion among civilised nations during the seventeenth, and France during the eighteenth century. If, as many think, England is now at the zenith of her power and greatness, where will the traces of her paramount influence upon the nineteenth century be sought by the Buckles of two centuries hence? Not so much in the imitation by other nations of our representative institutions, of trial by jury, of freedom of the press, or even in the wide diffusion of English books, as in the reproduction all over the world of some of our lighter social peculiarities, such as the chimney-pot hat, the late dinner hour, the conventional laws of English etiquette, and, most of all, in the contagious passion for our national pastimes, such as fox-hunting, cricket, and horse-racing. In regard to fox-hunting, the sport is of such a nature as to forbid its deterioration in or out of England by the fraud or dishonesty of its votaries. Fox-hunting, like Italy, farà da se,—will protect itself from harm. Much the same may be said of cricket, although occasionally whispers are heard, and especially in the county of Kent, that there is less of honest and manly love of the game for its own sake than of yore, and that "gate-money" possesses powerful and increasing attractions. But in regard to horse-racing, which in perhaps a more special manner than either of the others may be called our national pastime, there is a constant, and, as England becomes richer, an increasing danger that fraud and avarice will degrade a noble sport until it becomes unworthy the pursuit of an honest man. Between 1810 and 1830 the passion for pugilism was not less general or less ardent than the passion for the turf is among us to-day. And yet, when the impression became general that no man could bet upon a prize-fight without the risk of subsequently finding that the fight had been sold by one of the combatants, public favour drifted away from "the ring," and the countenance of all people who retained any self-respect was withdrawn from

its support. Never, perhaps, has the turf been more heartily patronised in England by rich, powerful, and enthusiastic supporters than at this moment. The favour of the heir to the Crown is abundantly lavished upon the sport. For something like nine months of every year there is hardly a week in which Dukes, Marquises, Earls, Viscounts, Barons, Baronets, and Squires may not be found assembled upon racecourses throughout the length and breadth of the island. During the last two years her Majesty's and Mr. Blenkiron's yearlings,—at the two most important sales of young thorough-bred stock in England,—have realised prices unexampled in the annals of Hampton Court and Eltham. The Duke of Hamilton's bid of 2,500 guineas for the Lady Elcho colt in 1866 is unparalleled in the long list of sales over which Mr. Tattersall and his father have for half a century presided. There are 500 horses in training at Newmarket, and John Day has under his charge at Danebury such "a lot," both as regards number and quality, as has never been excelled in the past history of any English trainer. Mr. Chaplin won upon the Derby of 1867 such a sum of money as leaves Mr. Merry, Sir Joseph Hawley, and all his other triumphant predecessors, far in the lurch. The number of thorough-bred foals born in these islands is steadily and constantly on the increase. To take the last three recorded years, 1,481 foals were born in 1862, 1,540 in 1863, and 1,567 in 1864. These, and many other signs of the times, may lead breeders of racing stock, and betting men in general, to conclude that the turf never was so prosperous,—that, as an institution, it was never more firmly rooted in the hearts of Englishmen. It is from no antipathy to the sport, from no other sentiment than a desire to minister to its perpetuity, that we whisper in the ear of the professional frequenters of Epsom, Ascot, and Newmarket, that a worm is at the root of their favourite pursuit, and that, unless the men of influence among them shall exert themselves, the admitted abatement and increasing laxity of turf morality will culminate in the withdrawal from a racecourse of all men to whom honour or honesty are something more than a name.

It is our fixed and firm belief that the turf, as it existed from 1800 to 1850, was the noblest pastime in which any nation, ancient or modern, has ever indulged. In the eyes of the statesman or the philosopher it is an essential condition of public games or sports that the minds of the spectators should be as little as possible brutalised or vitiated by contemplating scenes of cruelty. If any man, intoxicated by the gorgeous strains of Pindar, imagines that the public sports of Greece were something much grander, more lofty, and more heroic than our Derby or St. Leger, let him be reminded that at the Olympian games,—celebrated at Olympia, in Elis, upon a plain girt upon the east and north by insurmountable mountains, and upon the south and west by the rivers Alpheus and Cladeus,—it was death by law to any woman who crossed either of the rivers to witness these contests. No

one who will take the trouble of studying the best modern * treatise upon the public games of Greece that has as yet been written, will have any reason to doubt that they were stained by acts of such cruelty and such indecency as to make the exclusion of women necessary and intelligible. The Romans in their Ludi Circenses went as far beyond their predecessors, the Greeks, in cruelty, as they fell short of them in refinement. In the Flavian Amphitheatre or Coliseum, the still existing ruins of which do more to attest the magnificence of the Rome of Titus and Domitian than any other building which time has spared, it was not unusual for hundreds and thousands of wild beasts to be massacred in a single day. Upon the consecration of this mighty amphitheatre by Titus, Suetonius tell us that five thousand wild beasts and four thousand tame animals were immolated; and in the games celebrated by Trajan,—one of the most humane of Rome's emperors,—after his victories over the Dacians, Dion Cassius narrates that not less than eleven thousand animals were slaughtered. Coarse and unrefined as were the Romans, no woman was allowed to take her seat in the Coliseum and look on at the games of the Circus from any other spot than the open gallery which ran round next to the sky, and which was removed hundreds of feet from the arena or stage upon which gladiators fought and lions were tortured. If Martial is to be credited, such scenes were witnessed in the Coliseum, in the days of Rome's degradation, as must have been revolting, not alone to modest women, but also to all men in whom any sense of decency survived. To come to more modern times, bear-baiting was unquestionably the most fashionable pastime of our ancestors during the reigns of the Tudor and Stuart monarchs. In his History of England, Lord Macaulay quotes passages from the diary of a Puritan, written in 1648, in which complaint is made that Henrietta Maria, queen to Charles I., had returned to England from Holland, "bringing with her, besides a company of savage-like ruffians, a company of savage bears, to what purpose you may judge by the sequel. Those bears were left about Newark, and were brought into country towns constantly on the Lord's day to be baited, such is the religion those here related would settle amongst us; and if any went about to hinder or but speak against their damnable profanations, they were presently noted as Roundheads or Puritans, and sure to be plundered for it." In tracing the causes which led to the restoration of the monarchy, and to the recall of Charles II., Lord Macaulay records that nothing weighed so much with our ancestors as the unpopularity of the Puritans, occasioned by their austere repression of all public pastimes. "Against the lighter vices," to quote Macaulay's own words, "the ruling faction waged war with a zeal little tempered by humanity or by common-sense. Sharp laws were passed against betting. Public amusements, from the masques which were exhibited at the mansions of the great down to the

* "Die Gymnastik und Agonistik der Hellenen." Krause, Leipsig. 1841.

wrestling matches and grinning matches on village greens, were vigorously attacked. One ordinance directed that all the maypoles in England should forthwith be hewn down. Another proscribed all theatrical diversions. Rope-dancing, puppet-shows, bowls, horse-racing, were regarded with no friendly eye. But bear-baiting, then a favourite diversion of high and low, was the abomination which most strongly stirred the wrath of the austere sectaries." If such were the pastimes of Englishmen during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it cannot be pretended that Spain, then the mistress of the world, was more scrupulous or more merciful than England. For in the sixteenth, no less than in the nineteenth century, the bull-fight was the great national fiesta of Spain; nor can it be doubted that the deterioration of the Spanish people is in no slight degree attributable to their passion for a spectacle which, itself the index and the stimulant of brutality, is more degrading to those who witness, than to those who take active part in it. "So long," said Richard Cobden, "as this continues to be the popular sport of high and low, so long will Spaniards be indifferent to human life, and have their civil contests marked with displays of cruelty which make men shudder."

We have glanced at the public sports of other nations, and of England in other times, with a view to establishing the assertion that horse-racing, as it existed in this island during the first half of the present century, was a noble and unexceptionable national pastime. There are few subjects upon which a painstaking man of letters might better expend his energy than upon the compilation of a narrative which should trace the rise, improvement, and perfection of the British racehorse, from the days when, about one hundred and seventy years ago, the ancestors of Childers and Eclipse were imported into England from the sands of Arabia, until the present time. It is less than two hundred years since the Duke of Newcastle and Sir John Fenwick,*—no mean authorities on such subjects in their own day,—pronounced that the meanest jade ever imported from Tangier would yield a finer progeny than could be expected from the best of our native breed. Accustomed as we now are to see emperors and kings, and foreign noblemen, and merchant princes from New York or Melbourne, flocking to London with a view to securing, at enormous prices, the best thorough-bred stock of England, it is hard for us to believe that, in the almanacks of 1684 and 1685, the native horses of these islands were valued, one with another, at not more than fifty shillings each. But interesting as would be an exhaustive treatise upon the racehorse from a competent hand, we would recommend no writer ever to attempt to moralise upon what may be called the histoire inédite of the turf. In the first place, the elevation of a community's purity was never yet effected either by Act of Parliament or

* *Vide* "The Duke of Newcastle on Horsemanship," and "Gentleman's Recreation. 1686."

by the pen of journalist or moralist. Secondly, it is idle for any writer to deal with such a subject as the gradual deterioration of turf integrity without a life-long familiarity with prominent actors in the scenes which he describes. In order to give vitality and truthfulness to his descriptions, it is necessary for him to mention names and dates, to cry aloud and spare not, to be precise in his particularisation of races, of horses, of jockeys, of trainers, and of owners. Much may be done by the vigilance of daily and weekly sporting papers to scotch malpractices; but no man who knows the turf can pretend to believe that any writer, whatever his authority, can be potential in killing them. Let any author, who is ambitious of lashing evil-doers upon a racecourse, be at the pains to read the "Essays on the Turf," published thirty years ago by Nimrod,—the best sporting writer that England has yet produced,—and let him thus learn, vicariously, his own impotence. But the great and essential difference between turf malpractices of to-day and those which Nimrod denounced is, that formerly noblemen and gentlemen, with few and rare exceptions, stood in little need of the lash of the censor. "Having seen the English turf reach its acme," wrote Nimrod in 1837, "I should be very sorry to witness its decline; but fall it must, if a tighter hand be not held over the whole system appertaining to it. Men of fortune and integrity must rouse themselves from an apathy to which they appear lately to have been lulled, and must separate themselves from unprincipled miscreants, who would elbow them off the ground which should be exclusively their own." Very different should be the language of the turf reformer of to-day. For, bewail it as we may, it is no longer possible to deny that the majority of noblemen and gentlemen who follow the turf as a profession lend themselves now-a-days to transactions such as most of their forefathers would have scorned. The turf is fashionable, richly patronised, and forms an apt and convenient délassement for the largest and wealthiest leisure class that any country, ancient or modern, ever boasted. Against such a pursuit, thus supported, it is idle for purists and scholars like Mr. Hughes and Professor Goldwin Smith to lift up their parable. "The devil," said Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden to his chaplain, who found him one day reading the Bible, "is very near at hand to those who are accountable to none but God for their actions." Many of the richest and most powerful patrons of the turf are secured, by the possession of great wealth and high social standing, from earthly accountability in no less degree than Gustavus Adolphus himself. Of what avail are the admonitions or suggestions of "Cato" or "Mentor" addressed to men of whom not more than five per cent. ever take in hand any other volume than the Racing Calendar or the Stud Book?

These remarks, therefore, are not written in the Quixotic expectation that they will be read by, or will influence that singularly heedless

and irresponsible section of the community which is generally known under the title of "the sporting fraternity." It is with a view of arresting the attention of thoughtful men in every class of life, who may themselves never have owned a racehorse, or been present at a race-meeting, that we desire to point out that the threatened decline and fall of the turf may be a real misfortune to England. It is an undoubted necessity that Englishmen should have a national pastime, capable of affording amusement to all classes, enacted in the open air, devoid of all taint of cruelty, and conducted, as far as possible, in accordance with the rules of fair play. Man is unquestionably a gambling animal, and the very energy which makes us strive to rise in life is twin-born brother to the spirit which makes men gamblers. We have done much in England to suppress such dens of iniquity as still flourish at Baden Baden and Homburg, and the only open gaming which exists among us is that which is enacted on racecourses. Nor is betting upon races an unmitigated evil,—least of all in the eyes of those who have seen trente et quarante played in Germany, baccarat in Paris, monte in Mexico, and faro in New York or Washington. Betting about the speed and endurance of a racehorse is unquestionably the noblest gambling in existence. Without betting there would be much fewer owners of racehorses in England; for it has been abundantly demonstrated, and by no one more clearly than by the late Lord George Bentinck, that it is impossible to make racehorses profitable, if taken one with another, unless their owner employs his knowledge of their capabilities, before they have appeared in public, by judicious backing. For these reasons let it not be supposed that it is our desire to write a diatribe against betting. That which we do desire to protest against is, that racing should be conducted,—as it is now,—not with betting as its accessoire, but with betting as its sole and only object and aim. It is against this that every true lover of the turf will join us in lifting up his voice, for it is incontestable that the "heavy plunging" of the present day will be fatal, not only to its perpetrators, but to the noble pastime which it degrades. With a view to a temperate statement of the inevitable tendencies of the heavy betting and short races now in vogue, and in the hope of awakening if possible the interest of thinking men who recognise the inherent merits and advantages of the turf, and who do not wish to see it relegated to the limbo whither steeple-chasing and the prize-ring have preceded it, these few remarks are offered for the consideration of those whom they may concern.

The dangers which threaten the turf seem to us two in number: I. The deterioration of the breed of racehorses: II. The deterioration of the owners of racehorses. Let us deal with them in the order of enumeration.

I. The thorough-bred English horse of the last half-century is as much the forced product of our high and artificial civilisation as is the

choicest textile fabric that Manchester or Belfast ever produced. The well-known "flyers," whose "portraitures,"—to borrow the phraseology of the Newmarket artists of the last century,—adorn many a wall, and whose pedigrees and exploits are better known throughout the length and breadth of these islands than the names and deeds of our most eminent statesman, Lord Chancellor, or prelate, grew by slow and gradual improvement to the admitted perfection which they have long since attained. Like the wheat-plant which we imported from the East to enhance its productiveness one hundred-fold, like the Persian apple which Western Europe has converted into the peach, Voltigeur, West Australian, Stockwell, and their progenitors and descendants, are, in the main, exotic as to their origin, and have been raised to perfection by English culture. The oldest of our thorough-bred pedigrees that can be traced with accuracy ends in Cromwell's celebrated imported stallion named Place's White Turk. Charles II., himself a great patron of the racecourse, imported mares in abundance from Barbary, which figure as Royal Mares in our old stud-books until this day. Prince George of Denmark, the husband of Queen Anne, seems to have had no passion so well developed as his passion for the turf, with which he strongly inoculated his royal wife. The Curwen Bay Barb, the Byerley Turk, and the Darley Arabian made their appearance in this reign, and were followed, in the reign of George II., by the sire to whom we are indebted for England's best racing blood,—the celebrated Godolphin Arabian. Let any man study the pedigrees of eminent racehorses during the first half of the eighteenth century, and he will find that their sires or grandsires, their dams or grand-dams, were, without exception, of Eastern blood. Take at hazard the quaint "description" which is appended to the "portraitures" of horses for which we are under obligations to John Cheny, the Fores of the middle of the last century. Here, for instance, is the text attached to—

"The portraiture of Childers, ye fleetest horse that ever run at Newmarket, or (as generally believed) was ever bred in the world. From an original painting in the Duke of Devonshire's house at Newmarket.

"This surprising horse was bred by Leonard Childers, Esq., of Yorkshire, by whom when young he was disposed of to his Grace ye late Duke of Devonshire. He was got by ye Darley Arabian. His dam was called Betty Leeds. She was got by ye late Marquess of Wharton's Careless, which was got by Spanker, a son of the Darcy Yellow Turk. Childers' grand-dam was got by the Leeds Arabian. His great-grand-dam was got by Spanker. His great-great-grand-dam was a natural Barb mare.

"Childers never run at any place but at New Market. He there, in April, 1721, beat the Duke of Bolton's Speedwell, 8 stone 5 pounds, 4 miles, 500 guineas. In the succeeding October, he received forfeit,

500 guineas, of Speedwell. He beat ye Earl of Drogheda's Chanter, 10 stone, 6 miles, 1,000 guineas. In ye following November he received 100 guineas forfeit of ye Earl of Godolphin's Bobsey; upon which he was taken out of keeping and has ever since been a stallion in possession of their Graces the late and present Dukes of Devonshire.

"Published this 21 day of June, 1740, by John Cheny."

In the above "description," there are three points to which we desire particularly to call notice. In the first place it will be remarked that upon both sides Childers's blood was Arabian or Turkish. Secondly, it will be remarked that, inasmuch as he was foaled in 1715, and ran for the first time at Newmarket in 1721, he was six years old when he made his first appearance. It is on record that before he figured as a racehorse he was long ridden by the Duke of Devonshire's groom in the hunting-field. Thirdly, let it be remarked that the two races upon which the tradition of his extraordinary fleetness is based, were, in one case, over four miles, in the other, over six miles of ground. We will reserve our application of these three points until hereafter.

We have not space to copy in full more than one other "description," which will disclose that the high stakes of the present day were not wholly unknown 150 years ago. "The portraiture of Fox, late the property of the Earl of Portmore," informs us that—

"This eminent horse was the property of Thos. Lister, Esq., of Yorkshire. He was got by Clumsey, which was got by Old Hautboy, bred by the Darcy family out of a Royal Mare, and got by the Darcy White Turk. Fox's dam was Bay Peg. Her grand-dam, Young Bald Peg, both bred by Mr. Leeds, and got by his Arabian. His great-grand-dam was called the old Morocco Mare. She was bred by the old Lord General Fairfax out of a foreign mare, and got by a Barb of his lordship's, called the Morocco Barb.

"Fox in 1719, then 5 years old, won the Lady's Plate at York, in the hands of Mr. Lister, who sold him to his Grace the late Duke of Rutland; in whose possession he beat the Duke of Wharton's Stripling at Newmarket. Upon the Duke's demise he was disposed of to William Cotton, Esq., of Sussex, in whose hands he won a 300 guineas prize at Quainton Meadow. Beat Lord Hillsborough's Witty Gelding in a match run (as reported) for near or full 20,000 pounds. Beat Lord Drogheda's Snip 3 matches for great sums; and was never beat until attended with disorders. He was the sire of many horses of high form, and died in 1738 at 23 years old: the property of the said Earl of Portmore."

It will be noticed, in addition to the magnitude of the sums for which matches were made early in the last century, that Fox's blood was on both sides Oriental, that he made his first appearance at five years old, and that all his victories were achieved over a distance of ground. From these two racehorses, Childers and Fox, which may

be regarded as representatives of their class between the years 1709, when the first races of which any record exists took place at Newmarket, and 1750, three general inferences may be drawn. First, that all our eminent racehorses in 1867, being the lineal descendants of Childers, Fox, Starling, Old Cartouch, and their contemporaries, owe their origin to Oriental dams and sires. Secondly, that during the last century, and especially during the first half of it, it was unusual for a racehorse to make his appearance in public at an earlier age than five years old. Thirdly, that it was an unheard-of thing for races to be run over a less distance than four miles of ground. In the eyes of our ancestors it seemed of little moment that a horse or mare should possess speed unless they also possessed what, in these quaint "descriptions," of which we have given two specimens, was called "goodness," or ability to stay. It is no unimportant matter to recall this fact at a moment when there is but one five-year old in England, Gomera, who can compete with three-year olds, at weight for age, over a cup course, and when there is not a single six-year old or aged horse in training who can hold his own in good company over the Beacon Course at Newmarket.

We have shown that the English thorough-bred of to-day is an exotic, and that he traces his pedigree up to Arabian, Turkish, or African dams and sires. Now nothing is more well established than that the characteristic excellence of Oriental horses was that, in addition to their speed, they possessed extraordinary powers of endurance. Few readers of Sir Walter Scott's "Talisman" will have forgotten the ride through the desert of Sir Kenneth of Scotland and the disguised Arabian physician, who was none other than Saladin the Soldan himself. The small party of Saracens by whom Sir Kenneth, half prisoner, half guest, was escorted, discerned, it will be remembered, at the distance of a mile or more, a dark object moving rapidly on the bosom of the desert, and which was recognised as a party of cavalry, much superior to the Saracens in numbers, and who proved to be Europeans in their full panoply. Flight was obviously a necessity for the Arabians, and in what manner it was put in practice had best be told in Sir Walter's words:—

"So saying, the Arabian physician threw his arm aloft, and uttered a loud and shrill cry, as a signal to those of his retinue, who instantly dispersed themselves over the face of the desert, in as many different directions as a chaplet of beads when the string is broken. Sir Kenneth had no time to note what ensued, for at the same time the Hakin seized the rein of his steed, and putting his own to its mettle, both sprung forward at once with the suddenness of light, and at a pitch of velocity which almost deprived the Scottish knight of the power of respiration, and left him absolutely incapable had he been desirous to have checked the career of his guide. Practised as Sir Kenneth was in horsemanship from his earliest youth, the speediest

horse he had ever mounted was a tortoise in comparison to those of the Arabian sage. They spurned the sand from behind them, they seemed to devour the desert before them, miles flew away with minutes, and yet their strength seemed unabated and their respiration as free as when they first started upon the wonderful race. The motion, too, as easy as it was swift, seemed more like flying through the air than riding on the earth. It was not until after an hour of this portentous motion, and when all human pursuit was far, far behind, that the Hakin at length relaxed his speed. 'These horses,' he said, 'are of the breed called the Winged, equal in speed to aught except the Borak of the Prophet. They are fed on the golden barley of Yemen, mixed with spices. Thou, Nazarene, art the first, save a true believer, that ever had beneath his loins one of this noble race, a gift of the Prophet himself to the blessed Ali, well called the Lion of God. Time lays his touches so lightly on these generous steeds that the mare on which thou sittest has seen five times five years pass over her, yet retains her pristine speed and vigour.' "

These words have been selected for quotation because, although extracted from a work of imagination, they are, like everything that Sir Walter Scott wrote, based upon truth. Nor would it be easy, within a shorter compass, to find a passage so indicative of the power of endurance, or, in other words, the ability to stay, possessed by the highest strain of Arabian horses. We shall, perhaps, be told, on the strength of certain trials of speed and endurance, enacted many years ago between English and Egyptian horses upon Egyptian soil, that the Arabian horse of to-day is immeasurably surpassed by the English racehorse. It might be answered that the last twenty years have greatly diminished the staying powers of the English thorough-bred, and that if we were now called upon to send twenty racehorses to the East, to gallop for ten miles across the desert against twenty Arabs, it would perplex us not a little, in spite of the five hundred horses in training at Newmarket, to get together a lot of twenty that would do credit to England. But the truer answer would be that, setting aside the superior advantages of training always possessed by the English horse, we have never yet come into competition with the finest blood of Arabia. It is only within the last few years, and especially since Burton and Palgrave have partially lifted the curtain which concealed Arabia from our view, that we have been admitted to any knowledge of that vast and mysterious province of the sun. We learn from Palgrave that the finest and purest Arabian horses are to be found, not in Egypt, or Persia, or Turkey, or Morocco, or Muscat, or Mesopotamia,—from all of which countries many so-called Arabian horses were imported into England during the last century,—but in the uplands of Nedjed, or Central Arabia. "Nedjed," says Palgrave, "is the true birthplace of the Arab steed, the primal type, the authentic model. Although their stature is somewhat low, they are so

exquisitely shaped that want of greater size seems hardly a defect. Remarkably full in the haunches, with a shoulder of a slope so elegant as to make one, in the words of an Arab poet, 'go raving mad about it;' just a little saddle-backed, a head broad above and tapering down to a nose fine enough to drink from a pint pot; a most intelligent and yet singularly gentle look; full eye; sharp, thorn-like ear; legs that seem as if made of hammered iron, so clean and yet so well twisted with sinew; a neat, round hoof; coat smooth, shining, and light; the mane long, but not overgrown or heavy. Nedjed horses are especially esteemed for great speed and endurance of fatigue; indeed, in this latter quality, none come up to them. To pass twenty-four hours on the road without drink and without flagging is certainly something; but to keep up the same abstinence and labour conjoined, under the burning Arabian sky, for forty-eight hours at a stretch, is, I believe, peculiar to the animals of this breed. Other Arab horses, with all their excellencies, are less elegant, nor do I remember having ever seen one among them free from some weak point. The genuine breed is to be met with only in Nedjed itself."

It is very possible that, by reason of the failure of the late Colonel Angerstein and others in their attempts to improve the English race-horse by going back again to Arabian sires, little heed will be given to these words of Palgrave. But it is an undoubted fact that the few Oriental sires imported into this country during the present century have had nothing to do with the purest strain of Arabian blood. The stallions given to William IV., and which stood during the fourth decade of this century at Hampton Court paddocks, were presents from Indian Imaums. The Viceroys of Egypt, the Sultans of Turkey,* and the Emperors of Morocco, have, during the last half-century, not unfrequently presented horses to the Sovereigns of Western Europe; but they were not veritable Arabian, but African, or Turcoman horses. Colonel Angerstein was a private individual, not overburdened with wealth, and his Arabs were probably of that half-bred Arabian type from which English officers, who are familiar with the East, assert that English studs descend. A writer of much experience, speaking last year upon this subject, says:—"There is certainly considerable alteration in the structure of our English racehorse from his Arabian ancestor. I should say he was really more like the Toorkoman or Persian horse. His shoulders are not so well thrown back as the pure Arab's, his quarters more inclined to droop. My belief is that there has been some change in the last twenty years. This alteration of form gives a longer back, a longer

* "Eight magnificent thorough-bred Arabian horses have just arrived as a present from the Sultan of Turkey to the Emperor of Austria."—*Extract from Vienna Correspondent of Times Letter, in Times of Aug.* 31, 1867.

"The seven splendid Arab horses, sent as a present to her Majesty, have just arrived, in charge of Mouraffen Bey, at the Royal Stables, Buckingham Palace. Accompanying these were two others for the Prince of Wales and the Duke of Beaufort."—*Observer, Sept.* 8, 1867.

barrel, and perhaps greater appearance of length, but it is not so really. The structure is altered for the worse, the various parts are not so collocated as to act with advantage, and it is contrary to the form of his Arabian ancestor. It is no unfrequent thing to see short jumped-up, long-legged horses stripped on the course. I have recently seen with regret many more of that sort than I like. Many are coarse, weedy, and positively ugly."

If we assume as a fact incapable of denial, that within the last twenty years the stamina and staying powers of English racehorses have been manifestly on the decline, it seems not unprofitable at this moment to record, first, that we owe the excellence of our English breed to the Darley Arabian and the Godolphin Arabian in a higher degree than to any other sires of the last century. Secondly, that all authorities agree in praising the endurance of the best Arabian horses even more than their speed. Thirdly, that within these last few months we have been taught by a traveller of unquestioned authority in what part of Arabia the purest and noblest strain of Arabs is to be found. There is,—we write it with regret,—but little probability that any English breeder of racehorses will have energy or enterprise sufficient to import a few sires and dams from Nedjed. The Royal Stud has for years been administered more with a view to obtaining a good average for the yearlings sold at Hampton Court than to repairing the faults in the blood, structure, and the endurance of the animal himself. Mr. Blenkiron breeds for fashion; and the importation of Arabian sires would be an experiment little likely to be productive of profit for six or eight years to come. There is nowhere in England what may be called a philosophical breeder of racehorses. If rumour be correct in stating that Lord Grosvenor is not indisposed to revive hereafter the traditional glories of the Eaton stud, it is possible that, in the event of his enterprise being equal to his wealth, he may think it not unworthy of him to endeavour to arrest the decadence of the English racehorse. But there is more probability that in North America and Australia,—those two young and exuberant nations of the future which we have inoculated with the virus of our English passion for horse-racing,—attention will within the next twenty years be given to this subject, and that the pur sang steed of Nedjed will sooner or later find his way to the burning prairies of the Mississippi valley, or be welcomed to Australian plains, scorched by a sun scarcely less fervid than the sol criador of his native Arabia.

The question whether our English strain of blood has deteriorated, and requires reinvigorating from the East, is, after all, a speculative question. We have stated at some length the reasons which induce us to think that during the last thirty years there has been too much in-and-in breeding amongst us, and that it could not but be advantageous to turn once more to the home of the Darley and Godolphin Arabians. But the deterioration in the stamina of the racehorse,

which has resulted from the short courses and two-year old racing now so much in vogue, is not a matter of speculation, but will be admitted by all who take any interest in the noble animal himself. Perhaps the best way of enforcing the lesson that colts and fillies, brought out to run ten, fifteen, or twenty times as two-year olds, are very rarely to be found in training at four and five years old, and are still more rarely stayers, will be by briefly reviewing the careers of a few modern horses, which stood training for several years, and were eminent for their staying powers. It will be seen that some of them made their first appearance as three-year olds,—others very late in the year as two-year olds,—but that in no instance did they run often during their first year. We submit it to the Jockey Club or to those who desire to win Ascot Vases and Goodwood Cups with horses four and five years old, that the inference to be drawn from the record of the past is irresistible and pregnant with warning. We shall limit our search to the last thirty-five years.

In the long annals of the turf no animal has ever appeared so often in public as Mr. Barrow's b. m. Catherina, by Whisker, out of Alecto. Her first appearance was, as a three-year old, in the Oaks of 1833, won by Sir M. Wood's Vespa; in which Catherina failed to obtain a place. Her last race was at Hednesford, in 1841, and she was beaten. But between 1833 and 1841 she started no less than one hundred and seventy-one times. Without being a first-class animal, she was good enough to win seventy-five times, almost all her races being over a distance of ground, and many of them in heats. We come next to more celebrated, but not to stouter or sounder mares,—Beeswing and Alice Hawthorn. Beeswing came out as a two-year old at Newcastle, in June, 1835, and was not placed in the Tyro Stakes. Her second appearance in the same year was at Doncaster, where she won the Champagne Stakes; and her third and last appearance as a two-year old was at Richmond, where she won. From 1835 until 1842 inclusive, she started seventy-three times; her last appearance being at Doncaster, where, aged nine years, she won the cup by five lengths, beating Charles the Twelfth, aged six years, winner of the St. Leger and of two Goodwood Cups; and Attila, three years, winner of the Derby. It is not necessary to record her many other triumphs. Alice Hawthorn never ran at two years old. As a three-year old, she ran three times, at insignificant meetings, winning twice. In 1842, as a four-year old, she won the Chester Cup; and ran nine times. In 1843, aged five, she ran twenty-six times; and in 1844, aged six, she ran twenty-four times, winning, in both years, many great races, and among them the Ascot Vase and Goodwood Cup. In 1845, aged seven years, she ran nine times. Altogether she ran seventy-one times.

We have not space to dwell in detail upon other horses, famous for stoutness and soundness. Suffice it to say, that Sir R. Bulkeley's

Isaac came out as a five-year old in 1836, and ran till 1842, starting eighty-eight times; that Sir W. M. Stanley's Zohrab came out at three years old in 1833, and ran till 1841, starting eighty-six times; that Barney Bodkin ran once as a two-year old in 1832, and continued running till 1839, starting sixty-six times; that Lord Exeter's Bodice came out at three years old in 1834, and ran till October, 1839, starting sixty-three times; that Mr. Ferguson's Harkaway came out as a three-year old in 1837, and ran till the end of 1841, starting thirty-nine times; that Major Yarburgh's Charles the Twelfth first appeared as a three-year old in 1839, and ran till 1842, starting thirty times; that Lanercost first appeared as a three-year old in 1838, and ran till 1842, starting forty times. The list might be indefinitely extended. We have selected at hazard a few horses famous for stoutness, between the years 1830 and 1840. But although the number of stout four, five, and six-year olds decreases rapidly in the racing calendars between 1850 and 1866, there is one uniform feature noticeable throughout the series. It applies to Rataplan, Fisherman, and Moulsey,—the three horses which have started most frequently within the last dozen years,—and is, indeed, of universal applicability. *Not one horse in a thousand that runs eight or more races as a two-year old will be in training at four years old, or, if in training, will be able to stay as a four-year old over a cup course.*

Few are the students of racing-calendar literature who are aware how many of our historical racehorses, such as Bay Middleton, Amato, Glencoe, Plenipotentiary, Mundig, Mameluke, Bloomsbury, The Baron, Pyrrhus the First, Sir Tatton Sykes, Blair Athol, and countless others, made their début in public after they had attained three years of age. To these names might be added a long list of famous horses, such as Touchstone, the Queen of Trumps, Voltigeur, Cossack, Wild Dayrell, and others, that ran but once as two-year olds. The career of Crucifix, whose first appearance was for the July Stakes in 1839, and her last for the Oaks, at Epsom, in 1840, and who started twelve times in eleven months without ever being beaten, is always sorrowfully pointed at by opponents of two-year old racing. "Surely," says Mr. George Tattersall, "that system of turf management and training cannot be good which forces a superior animal so much beyond her strength and sends her a cripple to the stud at three years old, sacrificed before she has reached the zenith of her age, by premature abuse of her great powers." What are we to say about the modern Crucifix, Achievement, who ran eleven times at two years old, and has to thank the exhaustion consequent upon powers overstrained at this early age for her defeat last year in the rich Middle Park Stakes, at Newmarket, and this year in the Oaks, at Epsom?

It may well be doubted whether our English racecourse will ever again see such mares as Beeswing and Alice Hawthorn, such horses as Lanercost or Harkaway. There is not a six-year old now in

training in England to whom any of these four could not at the same age have given a stone and a beating over the Beacon Course. But we have said enough to satisfy even the most thoughtless that the English racehorse of to-day cannot stay and stand training like the horses of the past. The last Derby winner that was in training at five years old was Teddington, and he won the Derby in 1851. Is it not high time for the Jockey Club to take these patent facts into consideration, and to debate whether the mischief is irremediable? We have not space here to offer suggestions or discuss remedies. Enough if we can get these facts generally recognised; for, in that case, profitable as it may be for gamblers to ruin colts and fillies by setting them to compete for a dozen or more two-year old races, we are not without hopes that, when some of the "heavy plungers" of the hour shall have passed away, a remedy will be found.

II. It is not our intention to touch otherwise than lightly and briefly upon the other and more formidable danger which bodes little good to the longevity of the turf,—that is to say, the serious deterioration in morale of the owners of racehorses. No one will suspect us of including in this sweeping censure all owners of racing studs. Happily for England, there are still upon the turf men,—not alone noblemen, baronets, and squires, but also some professional betting-men,—in regard to whom, as in regard to the late Lord Exeter, it is felt by the public that any horse that carries their colours upon a racecourse will run no less truly upon its merits than the needle points to the pole. Of them, as of the greatest jockey that England ever produced, it might be said that "it would be as easy to turn the sun from his course as Frank Buckle from the path of honour and duty." Far be it from us to mention their honourable names, or to reveal how short the list is. We have already offered to sporting writers our advice to confine their comments upon any turf malpractices which they may notice to the columns of the daily or weekly press. Essays upon turf morality, whether imbedded in the pages of a magazine or published independently, have never yet done any good. He who undertakes to write them should himself be "as holy as severe;" and cannot but be aware that incedit per ignes suppositos cineri doloso. The ground upon which a turf censor treads is too delicate to be lightly trodden. Nevertheless we are not without hope that some of the younger patrons of the turf will look around them, and ask themselves whether the atmosphere which they now breathe upon a racecourse is the same that Lord Glasgow, Lord Zetland, and General Peel, the late Dukes of Richmond and Bedford, the late Lord Eglinton, and Admiral Harcourt, exhaled and respired five-and-twenty years ago. Is an atmosphere of elevation and purity compatible with a system of betting which lowers the dignity of those who pursue it into the dirt, and makes their transactions, their gains and losses, their pecuniary engagements, and all that honourable men love to regard as sacred,

the theme of every idle and malicious tongue? "There are men of education and high birth who are as much in the power of the betting fraternity and of the money-lender, as the unfortunate debtor was in the power of his aristocratic creditor at Rome." These are grave words. Would that we could indignantly deny their truth! The same contemporary writer proceeds to say, "A robbery on the turf is a very bad thing when it is designed by one man; but to find that it may be whispered in the ear of an English nobleman or gentleman, without repulsion and disgust, not unfrequently with partisanship and co-operation, is much worse." It has often been remarked that no nation, or no section of a nation, is ever cognisant of a decline in its own morality. The Romans under Julius Didianus thought themselves, says Gibbon, the equals of the Romans under Augustus. We are sometimes told that if horses are "pulled" now with the cognisance of men of birth and high position, there were Lord Darlingtons and others half a century ago who stuck at nothing,—that if racing accounts are badly settled now, it took a noble lord in the palmy days of 182— many months to pay up the huge sum of money which he lost on the Doncaster St. Leger. It is hardly necessary for us to answer that the men of rank and fortune who stooped to malpractices of yore, were as much an exception to the mass of their order as are the honest owners of horses the exception upon a racecourse of to-day,—that the delayed settlement in 182—, to which we have alluded, was the solitary default in a prolonged turf career. But there are other evidences of the diminished self-respect of many noble and gentle patrons of the turf, which cannot be noticed without regret and humiliation by thoughtful and reflective moralists. The racehorse, it would seem, is a more democratic leveller than Mr. Beales or Mr. Odgers; a greater disintegrator of aristocratic society than the railroad, or the penny press, or the Reform Bill itself, big with mysterious and inscrutable possibilities. That a young, raw, uneducated Yorkshire or Newmarket lad, who can ride seven stone, but who cannot pen a letter of which a milkmaid would not be ashamed, should be welcomed to the homes of dukes and marquises,—that he should be encouraged to smoke cigars, play billiards, and volunteer opinions without restraint in the presence of his betters of either sex,—is one of the saddest anomalies of our modern civilisation. The days are at hand when the people of England will pay little respect to men and women with handles to their names who do not respect themselves. Fashion, said Henry Fielding more than a century ago, can alone make and keep gambling sweet and wholesome. When it shall cease to be fashionable for men born in the purple to chat and smoke with jockeys and trainers, and to bet thousands and tens of thousands upon the speed and bottom of a racehorse, without any other means of paying, if the race goes against them, than the indulgence a money-lender shall afford,—then, and not till then, shall we expect to see the rehabilitation of the turf.

ON SOVEREIGNTY.

We are told in Scripture that the people of God desired for themselves a king, and that they were grievously afflicted by a succession of kings who were, for the most part, bad,—given to cruelty and blood, tyrants who coveted and too often took to themselves the wives and wealth of their subjects,—and that thus the people of the Lord were punished for their desire to abandon the labours, the dangers, and the responsibilities of democratic action. For it seems to be thus and thus only that we can read the lesson taught us in the early history of the children of Abraham.

But the longing of the Israelites for a king seems to have been natural enough. If we may judge of them as we would of other nations,—not knowing or at all understanding how far the direct dealings of the Lord with this people should have made them specially capable of the responsibility of independence,—we may well imagine that the security to be derived from a supreme authority should have been felt by them to be beneficial. Little, we may suppose, was then said or thought among men of the glories of democratic rule. But property already had its charms, and the value of safety was appreciated. From those days to these in which we are now living some kind of sovereignty has been found to be indispensable by all nations. The necessity of placing in some specially selected hands the powers of executing the laws, has been acknowledged to be a necessity in all ages and in all countries. Whether the power of making the laws shall be placed in the same hands or in others, or whether the simple will of the owner of those hands shall in itself be law, has been a matter of controversy among nations. That controversy, carried on through ages, has become a science, to which we give the familiar name of politics, and from it there have sprung the three leading forms of sovereignty which are at present in use among the nations of the earth. That in each of these there are diverse branches,—branches so diverse as to make the one but little like the other,—is true;—but we may probably take with safety this division as sufficient, and declare that in treating of sovereignty we may class all sovereigns under one of these heads.

There is firstly the autocratic sovereign, whom we may perhaps call an Emperor, as the name of despot is unsavoury. With him the full sovereignty is supposed to rest in his own hands.

There is, secondly, the elected temporary sovereign of a so-called republic,—whom we may style President,—in whose hands also, for

the period of his rule, much of the political sovereignty of the nation is vested, if indeed all of it be not entrusted to him.

And there is, thirdly, the constitutional sovereign, whom we still delight to honour by the name of Monarch, and whom, that we may be easily understood, we will call simply a King. In his hands,—such at least is the intention of his subjects,—is placed no political power; but to him is confided the duty of choosing those who shall exercise political power,—with more or less of control exercised over him in the making of such choice. As, however, it has come to be perceived, that the choice of a political minister is in itself the very source and fountain of political power, control over that choice has become a necessary part of the third mode of sovereignty.

In discussing the various merits of these three forms of government we may perhaps fairly take France, and the United States, and England as our examples. It has been already admitted that in each form there are branches so diverse, that two of the same shall, perhaps, hardly be recognised by any lines of family likeness. The rule of the French Emperor and that of the Sultan are by no means the same in their nature. The Republics of the United States and of Mexico, are not in similar conditions. And the Crowns of England and of Prussia affect the people in very different degrees. But in each case the example selected may be taken, probably, more justly than any other, as showing the condition to which that special mode of sovereignty will, if successfully conducted, lead a great nation.

And here it may be well to observe that it is, and of necessity must be, the natural desire of all peoples to preserve and to honour, and to pay all legal obedience to the sovereigns of their choice. This assertion may at the first hearing seem to many to be incompatible with the disobedience and the rebellion which is always prevailing in some quarter of the civilised world. But rebellion is wrought either by the unjust or by the injured. If by the unjust,—then it is wrought in opposition to the people and not in their behalf, and is no sign of animosity from a people towards its sovereign. Such rebellions have rarely prevailed. If by the injured,—then we may say that the sovereign under whom injustice is done is no longer sovereign by the choice of his people. But as all sovereignties have been established simply for the weal of the nation, that life and property may be safe, that good laws may exist and have force, that the evils of anarchy may be avoided,—in short, that life may be a blessing and not a curse,—the source from whence that blessing is to come cannot but be dear to mankind. In fact, men have ever delighted to honour their sovereigns, expecting much, hoping much, bearing much, forgiving much. The wonder has been that they have so often continued to honour men who have been unworthy of any honour, and to obey men who have been unfit to receive obedience.

But mankind, when supporting the throne which they have esta-

blished, have also been desirous of exacting from their occupants the performance of those duties for the fulfilment of which the thrones are there. Men have wished to be governed justly;—have wished, at least, to be governed. With a dim unconscious acknowledgment of the difficulty of the task imposed upon their sovereigns, they have endured much, have feared to rush from evils which they knew to evils which they knew not, and have often borne all in despondence. Again, at other times they have risen against their thrones, saying that this must be altered, and that, because the safety and the gentle sweetness of life, expected under beneficent ruling, have not been forthcoming. And so it has gone on till men have come to understand that as all servants must do their allotted tasks, or quit the service of their masters, so also must it be with Emperors, with Presidents, and with Kings. A nation indeed cannot rid itself of an idle or an ill-doing king, as may a husbandman of a lazy ploughman, or a merchant of an incompetent clerk. The higher is the service, the more difficult must it be to change the servant. But that such change is within a nation's right, when the cause has arisen according to the nation's judgment, few subjects will now dispute. That such change is within a nation's power, few sovereigns will not acknowledge. A divine right to rule amiss is an idea which even the most loyal Russian qualifies by the occasional use of a rough escape from an evil so unbearable and so absurd. A divine right to rule amiss is a theory against which the intelligence of civilised nations has at length revolted, successfully and for ever.

All sovereignties have sprung from democracy;—but from democracy incapable in the infancy of nations of executing its own work and obtaining by its own powers that rule which it has desired. Other nations demanded kings, as did the Israelites, because in their ignorance and weakness they could find no safety without supreme power. Sovereignty has been the refuge of democracy in its infancy, and has been the nurse which has fostered the child. History, indeed, does not make the understanding of this easy to us. When we remember what deeds have been done by rulers, how for ages the people of this nation and of that have lain in the hands of despots, and have been used as the goods and chattels of tyrants, it is hard to acknowledge that these despots and tyrants have been the children of democracy. Things have gone astray, there has been lack of foresight and want of wisdom, and the science of sovereignty has been one difficult to learn. When we find how far we are still astray we cannot but think that the world is yet young, and is even now only learning its lesson. But it has progressed so far, that we find it to be at length understood in all great nations,—in all nations as they become great,—that the form of sovereignty to be used is to be one dependent altogether on the will of the people, that it is to be changed when the desire of the people for such change is expressed

with sufficient clearness, and that except by the will of the people no sovereignty can exist. The lesson is being learned that the sovereign, let him be of this class or of that, is the servant of the people, and that it is the duty of a people to see that it is duly served.

And as sovereignties have all sprung from the will of the people, so are they all tending to and producing the direct government of men by themselves,—which is the very essence of democracy. If this could be understood by men,—by men who desire that at least their portion of the world should be governed in peace and safety, the word democracy would not be held in that contempt which is now attached to it, nor would the theory be regarded with that fear which is felt for it. The sovereignty in England, as it now exists, can be thoroughly and loyally supported by none but democrats; nor can the occupant of the throne trust to any form of governance or fashion of ruling but that of democracy. Nevertheless, the name has become odious,—even to those who are themselves the chosen ministers of democracy, and the resolute protectors of democratic rule. If there were another word sufficient to serve the purpose, we would use it,—but there is none other that would not be a poor makeshift, and a sign of cowardice, if here adopted. But we will make protest that true democracy may be most zealous in the support of a throne, and that here, in England, it is so, expecting simply in return that the duties attached to the throne shall be performed according to the covenant existing between the throne and the people.

The sovereignty of the autocrat has been placed first on our list under the conviction that that form of sovereignty is in use among people whose progress towards perfect government has been the least;—for it is better to advance from the lower to the higher than to have to descend and march backwards. And here let us pause a moment to assert that in so speaking of the sovereignties of autocrats there is no intention to sneer at them as being inferior in their uses to the half-fledged institutions of ill-ruled republics, or to the worn-out governments of ill-ruled kingdoms. No one will presume to say that the position of a Frenchman under his Emperor is inferior to that of a citizen of Guatemala or of Venezuela. But, as we have ventured to divide all sovereignties into three classes, and to select as an example of each that nation which seems to be best ruled in its own class, the comparison to be made will be between the best of each. A rope is as strong only as its weakest part; but it will be acknowledged that any form of government is as strong as it is found to be when seen at its best. The doctrine that autocratic sovereignty is adopted by people whose advance in the science of governing has been the least, is quite compatible with the superiority of a great empire to a poor republic.

It is so easy to be governed by an autocrat, as it is easy to be ruled as a child, or to live under a religion, if one's powers of

believing will permit it, which is capable of prescribing exact duties and which dispenses with the need of thought! If only the autocrat be wise, be just, be strong enough; if he see far enough, if he be a loving lord, beneficent, wholly unselfish, diligent, watchful, knowing all that his people want, understanding not only their desires but their interests; if he be merciful, tender, careful of his subjects as a mother is of her children, and with power to make such care of constant service, how well it would be to live under such a lord! But there is only one Lord such as this, and He is in heaven. And it is clearly His will that here among ourselves we should rule ourselves, so that by our own actions and our own workings we may at length become men such as He would have us to be.

Mankind in their search after sovereigns,—for sovereigns who should relieve their subjects of the grievous burden of self-government,—have ever looked for some such Emperor as this. But, alas! the Emperors that they have found have, for the most part, been of another sort. But still men have been found who have ruled with strong will and powerful hands, doing much of that which has been required of them. And hence, there has come much ease, and, perhaps, some comfort. Men have been enabled to live as children,—being also scourged as children are scourged. And they who have ruled them have too often been masters, not parents,—masters of that dishonest sort whose minds are given to their own profit rather than to the welfare of those entrusted to their care.

But still men have had their wish and have been ruled. And there has been so much of satisfaction in the simplicity of autocratic government that nations still cling to it, thinking it to be, of all governments, the easiest. And there are nations who, having once assumed the privilege of self-rule, have returned to the rule of an autocratic sovereign, either from deliberate choice, or from idleness and weakness in the work of democracy. France has so returned; and, without attempting to show whether this return has been produced by deliberate choice or by idleness and weakness, we will look for a moment at her position, and at the position which an emperor of the French must assume.

The material progress of France under the present Empire has been so great, that no man with eyes to see or ears to hear can deny it. We are told that Augustus found Rome of brick and left it of marble. The same praise may be given to Napoleon III.,—not only as regards Paris, but as regards almost all France. And there has been order in his time, under which trade has flourished, and France, for the time, has become wealthy. To us, who are deeply in love with self-government, it seems passing strange that so great a people should submit themselves to the will of one man; but when we perceive, and acknowledge, as we are bound to do, how greatly the prestige of the nation has been increased under this rule, we can hardly wonder

that they also should be in love with their Empire. And we must remember that it has sprung, by no unnatural birth, from their often expressed desire for equality. A cry was made for Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality. Of liberty the Frenchman finds that he has, at any rate, so much that he can live nearly as he lists while he obeys the laws. That fraternity is to be produced by no form of government, he is by this time aware. But under the Empire, equality of a certain nature has been achieved. In order to obtain this he is willing to acknowledge one superior, and to regard as a part of that great One the counsellors, the generals, the favourites, the parasites, and the creatures with which a one so great must of necessity be encumbered. Under the Emperor and his court all men are equal,—and thus one of the fondest dreams of democracy is, after a fashion, fulfilled. Many an American will tell you, being much in the dark as to liberty, caring nothing for fraternity, but revering equality in his very soul, that the present government of France is of all governments the best, because equality has been attained. Under this government no subject is greater than another, and there is, at any rate, ease for an obedient people.

But there is no ease for an Emperor, nor can there be assured safety. The charioteer who takes the reins of such an Empire in his hands must be prepared to perform himself the laborious work of driving, and must be the first to undergo the perils of the road. And he must acknowledge to himself also that when he ceases to perform his task, he must cease to be Emperor. As to this or that special act he may disregard the voice of his subjects, but he can hold his seat only on the condition that he does regard that will in the general. Subjects are long-suffering, but there is an end to their forbearance, and when they are taught to look to one superior in all matters of public interest, to expect from him national glory and national prosperity, they will not rest contented unless they receive that which they expect. We are now speaking specially of France, where no one is so well aware of the truth of this doctrine as the Emperor himself; but, in a rough manner, and with much absence of precision, the same doctrine has made itself good in all despotisms. And it is the Emperor in person who must be able to see what it is that his people desire. He must never sleep, must never rest. His great business must mix itself in all his pleasures, must direct his magnificence, must regulate his hospitalities, must command his hours. He may never be vacant, he may hardly be ill; it is seldom that he can abdicate, and the only privilege left him is to die. A people have chosen that he shall do for them the work with which they will not trouble themselves, and he has no escape from the burden. An Emperor may have ministers to assist him, but he can have no minister to relieve him of the personal responsibility of his acts. All that his government does, is done by him; and in all that his government sins, he himself is the sinner. He is powerful, he is magnificent,—

and he may be vicious, and the patron of vice in those around him, if such be his taste. He may possibly be a patriot, and be happy in the glory and prosperity of his people. If there be for him any consolation, it is in these things that he must find it.

For the people of an empire this might be well, if the turning of Rome from bricks to marble were sufficient recompense for the loss of that self-esteem which attaches itself always and in all things to self-rule. Rome when it became marble was an empire already tending to decay, because the power of turning brick into marble was placed in the hands of one man. Augustus made Rome magnificent, but the history of the successors of Augustus is the story of a string of beasts on their way to the slaughter-house. Such was their history because it is more human for a man so tempted to seek consolation in the allurements of personal honour, of magnificence, and of vice, than to devote his days and nights to the terrible responsibilities and unceasing labours of single-handed government for the sake of a subject people.

Our second form of government is that which we call republican, in which there has in latter times been generally adopted the use of a sovereign, or president, elected for a term of years. This has been specially the case in that most successful of all modern republics, the United States of America. And in speaking of the President of the United States we must beg our readers to put away from their minds,—or at any rate to understand us as desiring that they should put away from their minds,—any idea they may have entertained that this President is not a sovereign. It is easy to change a name, and it is easy to keep a name. We have kept the titles of monarch and sovereign as well as king, though no Englishman dreams that the occupant of our throne governs alone. The Americans have taken for their chief of the State the name of President; but all who understand aught of the constitution of the States know that the so-called President does much more than preside over the government of the nation. He is, in fact, the very government himself, almost as thoroughly as is the Emperor of the French the very government in France. It is somewhat difficult to speak on this matter now, as there is, at this very moment, coming a change upon the position of the Executive of the United States which will make that to be untrue to-morrow which was true yesterday. But this is true at any rate of to-day, and of the constitution of the United States as still existing, that, in all matters of the Executive, the President is held to be supreme. He cannot change the laws, nor can he have them changed,—as is within the compass of the power of the Emperor of the French. Nor can he override the laws,—as may any despotic emperor. Nor can he be efficacious to the making of new laws,—as are the ministers of the throne with us. But under the laws, and in obedience to the laws, the President of the States is

in truth a monarch. He rules, and he is responsible for ruling. If there be fault, it is he that is guilty; if there be disgrace, it is he that has disgraced his country. If success be achieved and glory accrue, the credit, for a time at least, is given personally to him. Such being the nature of the government in the United States, it is essentially necessary that the President of the Union should be a working man; a man with views of his own on all political subjects with which his country is concerned; one who, so to say, can lead a party and promote the political views of that portion of his countrymen who have been able by the majority of their votes to place him in the position which he holds. The President must thus perform not only those duties which in this country are held as appertaining to the Crown,—as far as the performance of such duties are needed in his country,—but must also occupy the position which among us is held by the first Minister of the Crown. And he also resembles a despotic sovereign in this, that he himself must govern his people.

The evil of this position, and the antidote to the evil,—and again the evil of the antidote, are apparent. The head of an empire,—such as is the Emperor of the French,—is at any rate intended to be permanent. As regards the supreme rule, there is under an Emperor's sovereignty no question of parties. In the United States no such permanence is intended. The Constitution has been framed with the purpose of giving to the people the power of being governed as they, —the people,—may at any time choose to be governed. The intention is so with them, as it is with us; but with them there is no constitutional power of changing a President as there is with us of changing a minister. Let what changes may come, either in the will of the people, or in the policy of the governor, or,—as is perhaps more probable,—let the people have been ever so much mistaken in their ideas of the political tendencies and aptitudes of the man whom they have selected, there he is and there he must remain for the allotted period of his rule, holding the reins and the real power of government in his hands, even though the whole people of his country be opposed to him. At this moment, not for the first time since the United States formed their Constitution, the President is in direct antagonism with both Houses of Congress. This antagonism is in itself evidence of no want of wisdom, of vigilance, or of fidelity on his part. As a minister with us is bound to have his own political views, and to act in accordance with them, so also is the President of the United States. With us the minister retires at once when these views are not in accordance with the will of the people;—but in the States the President cannot retire. He may incur the contumely of his people, and the political pugnacity of both Houses of Congress. He may be threatened from day to day with impeachment, he may be subjected to the hostility of the whole press of his country, but he must remain in his place till the term of his service is over.

It cannot be denied that this is an evil,—an evil so great that at the present moment men who are looking on with friendly eyes at the political throes of the country, can hardly see how the ruling of the nation can be carried on without such breaches of the Constitution as will make that much-loved document little better than a dead parchment. The remedy adopted for the curing of this evil,—for a state of things which, without a remedy, was foreseen to be evil by the framers of the Constitution,—was to be found in the short duration of the President's term of office. He is elected for four years,—so that no prolonged period of opposition between him and his people can be possible. This has been the antidote; and when the nation was younger and smaller, when politics were not predominant in men's minds as they are now, when the subjects for variance were not so great or felt to be so important, the four years sufficed. But as thoughts and feelings and passions advance at present, four years is an eternity in politics. Let us think how our people and our Parliament could endure a minister insured in power for four years. The President of the United States is intended to represent the very essence of democracy; but, in truth, such an officer of State, in the position to which the political circumstances of his country have brought him, is the outcome of a form of government very much less democratic than that which is in vogue with ourselves.

Of the position of the President of a Republic we may say,—of such a Republic as that of the United States,—that no high place in the world is apparently less blessed to the holder of it. When we look back at the roll of the names of the men who have ruled in Washington since the time in which the nation was making its grand and early efforts, what do we learn? The men who have been selected to govern their country have toiled without rest, or ease, or any of the sweet pleasures of life, for their four years of political ascendency, and then have sunk into obscurity almost without a niche in history. Washington and Jefferson and the Adamses were the leaders of a young nation, and as such are known to fame. But with the exception of Jackson, who was a strong man, and of Lincoln, who was murdered in his glory, who knows aught of their successors? What ideas do we connect with the names of Van Buren, and Harrison, and Tyler, and Polk, and Taylor, and Filmore, and Peirce, and Buchanan? And yet these men for the most part did their duty gallantly by their country. On the whole we cannot think that the election of a President for four years is a form of sovereignty good for the people; and we certainly think that it is one very far from good for him who is elected.

We now turn to that mode of sovereignty which we in England have adopted, and which we call constitutional. In accordance with the theory of this form, though we have a king at the head of affairs, the governance of the nation is entrusted to the people themselves; and the ministers selected for purposes of government, though they are

nominated by the sovereign, are so nominated under the direct control of the people. It is easy to see at a glance that the lines which bound this special class of sovereignty cannot be laid down with the precision of which the two other great classes admit. The idea of an empire ruled by one man is clearly and rapidly conceived. The mind, indeed, is struck with wonder when it attempts to realise the amount of labour which must be thrown on that man's back if he really performs his task; but, given the man, and the plan of government is simple enough. And again the position of a Republican President, such as we have endeavoured to describe it to be, is comparatively simple and defined. Every educated citizen of the United States understands the terms on which the President rules for his period of sovereignty; and almost all their citizens are educated. The exact conditions and the boundaries in the latter case have been written; while in the former they are manifest, and require no writing. But with us the sovereignty is a thing so complex that grey-headed statesmen who have spent their years in the political guidance of our sovereigns still differ as to its proportions and purposes. Its clearest rules are traditional rather than written, and, though traditional, have continued to change from year to year since England had a king, down we may say to the present day. When we attempt to describe the intricacies of our sovereignty to foreigners, we find it almost impossible to succeed. The Frenchman, who loves political simplicity, abhors a constitutional monarchy and disbelieves in it. The American will declare that we hug our chains when we speak of our throne. A Swiss will tell an Englishman, with a proud boast, that the Swiss are free because they have no king. Even the Prussian and the Italian who are successfully striving to achieve what we have achieved, do not yet understand the grand rule,—that a king can do no wrong.

But here we are writing to Englishmen, and may hope to be understood. Do Englishmen understand the meaning of that rule which is so often in their mouths, and which is certainly true in accordance with the existing theory of our Constitution?

The maxim that the king can do no wrong may perhaps with propriety be termed the fundamental rule of constitutional monarchy; —not that it can at present be said to have been matured in any monarchy but our own; not that in our own it has in fact been a rule of long standing;—but that it contains the essence of the theory on which such sovereignty is based. There shall be no ground for quarrel between the people and the throne on matters of policy and government, and therefore in such matters the throne shall have neither power nor responsibility. The words can have no other meaning; but such meaning as that at once reconciles a free people to the institution of a throne, and renders possible the construction of a sovereignty that is compatible at all points with democracy.

The words if used with any other conception are absurd. He who can do aught, can do wrong,—and must be responsible for the wrong he does, be he Emperor, or President, or King. The occupant of our throne can do no political wrong, because that which he does he does always, and in all circumstances, in strict accordance with the advice of others, and for the giving of that advice those others are responsible.

The blessings of a sovereignty so constituted have come to us very slowly. They must necessarily have come slowly. An institution so intricate in its arrangements could not have been produced ready made by any brain; nor could a sovereign be found to sit upon a throne on such terms without much schooling, either in his own person, or more effectually in the persons of his predecessors. It is natural that a man called a monarch should wish to govern. It was needful too that the king should govern, at least partly govern, till the theory was complete. And, again, it was natural that successive kings when called upon to resign the privilege of governing should resign that privilege with regret. We all know how the contest for this power was carried on in our own country; how blood was shed, and a king was killed; and how for a time the people thought that such sovereignty as that now established was impossible;—how with the innate love for a king which seems to spring naturally in the heart of every Englishman, the country restored the throne, and how the fight went on. There were two things to be gained,—that there should be a throne occupied by an hereditary sovereign, and that the occupant of the throne should be politically powerless. We have gained them both; but no historian can put his finger on the day, and mark the spot, and say then and there the victory was perfect. In 1801 Pitt threw up his ministry because the king would not consent to release the Roman Catholics of Ireland from political disabilities, but even Pitt did not understand that the king's resistance was unconstitutional. George IV. struggled,—but struggled so weakly that the ministers of the day hardly regarded his efforts. In 1832, we find that William IV. was consulted about the Reform Bill; and though we feel that he understood thoroughly the wisdom and necessity of complying with the will of the people, still the history of that time will speak of a great political change for making which the king's personal consent was needed. No one has as yet hinted in reference to the new Reform Bill, by which household suffrage has just now been given to us, that the present occupant of the throne was consulted as to the expedience of adopting it. We do not presume to guess at the manner in which ministers tender their advice to the sovereign; but we are sure that a minister would be guilty of a grave offence against both the throne and the people who should attempt to throw upon the sovereign that responsibility,—that capability of doing wrong,—which is inseparable

from a personal effort, from a personal opinion,—nay, almost from a personal bias.

We read much in our history of the so-called prerogatives of the sovereign, and find that one after another these prerogatives of the sovereign have mostly disappeared. All have in fact been annulled in which anything of political power was adherent. No one dreams now that the sovereign could dissolve Parliament, or declare war. The judges of the land, if any case on such questions could come before them, would say that in accordance with the law it is clearly within the power of the sovereign to do either; but there are none so ignorant as not to know that practically such steps can be taken only by the ministers of the throne, who are responsible to Parliament and to the people.

The irresponsibility of the throne in political matters, the fact that the throne can do no political wrong, is perhaps best shown by the incapability of the sovereign to be politically inconsistent. Everybody knows that Acts of Parliament require for their ratification the consent of King, Lords, and Commons; and that any Act passed to-day may be repealed to-morrow. But though an Act were passed to-day and repealed to-morrow, and passed again the next day, no one would think of twitting the sovereign with inconsistency. It might be said that Parliament did not know its own mind, or that the people were in doubt. There would be strong evidence that the subject was one on which the minds of men were vacillating. But though the change were made twenty times in as many sessions under the same sovereign, no one would say that the sovereign had vacillated.

We may, perhaps, best express our idea of the position of a constitutional sovereign by comparing the edifice of our constitution to that of a beautiful church. When Americans have spoken to us of the throne of England as being the source of political power and action, we have often asked them to look at Salisbury Cathedral, and to say what the building would be if it were suddenly deprived of its tower and spire. Ichabod! The glory of the house would be gone! The men of Wiltshire would no longer have a cathedral in which to take pride, and the pleasant little city would have lost its attraction in the eyes of all the world. But yet the church would stand and be as strong. It does not rest upon its apex. The real work for which it was built is not done within those beautiful but narrow confines. But from the tower comes that peal of bells which calls the people to the worship they love, and the spire was built that it might be seen from afar off, and recognised as the symbol in those parts of the religion of the country. So we think is it with such a sovereignty as that which we possess.

The throne of England is divested of political action and of political responsibility, but not on that account is it divested of all action and all responsibility. The duties of the sovereign are arduous, and

demand, for their due performance, care, patience, self-denial, erudition, hospitality, and patriotism; and if left unperformed, cannot be so left without danger to the throne, disgrace to its occupant, and injury to the people. Thus, a maxim which declares that the Sovereign of England can do no wrong, and which we have ventured to call the grand rule of Constitutional Sovereignty, cannot be taken by any reasonable being as implying that the highest officer of State is incapable of omitting duties,—that he is either above or below the power of transgressing in his office. If there be any who so think, they must regard their sovereign either as a god,—or as an idol of clay, a Nebuchadnezzar's image, a King Log. That the maxim has a deep, nay, an all-important meaning, we have endeavoured to show. It is to be applied to political government, and to all matters of real ruling, either as regards the working or the execution of laws; but it does not apply to these duties, for the performance of which we look to the sovereign himself. Those duties cannot be neglected without wrong done, and such wrong done cannot be passed without penalties.

It is the first duty of the sovereign to preside over, and indeed to create and fashion that court which is regarded much by ourselves, and much more by other nations, as being the tangible symbol and visible evidence of the greatness and magnificence of the country. Such an empire as that of the United States, which has been constructed on lines of republican simplicity, may, at any rate for many years, dispense with such outward signs. Where there are no blue ribbons and no knights to wear them, no graduated ranks of dukes, earls, and barons, no nobility whose greatness is regarded as at any rate equal to that of the nobles of other countries, there is needed no court magnificence to which the magnificence of all others shall be subordinated. But with us, though we claim that our democracy is, in regard to political power, further extended and more pure than that to be found in any other great nation, all the appanages of nobility not only exist, but live with so strong a life that they show no sign of decay. These things here in England are felt to be useful, and are popular; and for their sustentation and due control the splendour of a court is needed. But the splendour of a court demands a chief, and that very chieftainship is laborious when the court is vast in its magnificence, as it is and must be with us. A Grand Duke of Pumpernichel may shoot boars throughout the winter, and play the fiddle all the summer,—and no harm done; but he may do so because the exigencies of the court of Pumpernichel are limited.

A sovereign with us cannot be dreaded;—but he should be loved, and to be loved he should be seen. It is hardly too much to say that every Englishman and Englishwoman who sees the occupant of the throne, becomes, by that very fact of seeing, a friend to the sovereign. And there are two classes by whom the sovereign should be seen,—the few who can come to him, and once at least in their lives stand face

to face with him, and signify their loyalty by their personal presence; and the many among whom the sovereign must go in order that thus he may be subject to the eyes of the multitude. Here alone is a great duty, which can hardly but be neglected if the boar-shooting be perpetual, and if the bow of the royal violin is never at rest. A British sovereign who would grudge his presence among his people, or curtail their right to testify their loyalty before him, would certainly neglect his duty. At Pumpernichel the Grand Duke may be seen by all in a day, and yet never intermit in his passion for the chase and the music-score. Doubtless it may be wearisome to sit for many hours, for many days, receiving strings of maidens with lace trains, files of gentlemen somewhat awkward with their swords;—but who is there, blessed with work to do, so blessed as to find that his work never palls on him? That privacy is sweet and publicity irksome, is a fact recognised by all men whose time has become public property. To go where many eyes may see one, and to be seen by many, to be called on to acknowledge the greetings of crowds, to be restrained from the delight of unlaborious thought and familiar prattle, to sit, as it were, with the sceptre heavy in the hand, and the crown galling the brow, must be labour indeed; but here, in England, we may boast that the labourer is not left without his reward. We have said that for the performance of these duties care is wanted, and patience, and self-denial. If we have been so far right in describing the task imposed on royalty, we need hardly add more words to prove that these virtues are needed for its performance.

And as it is required that a sovereign in England should be free in his intercourse with his own subjects, so also is it necessary that he should be magnificent in his reception of those who may come to him from other courts. We have said that erudition and hospitality are among the attributes necessary for the performance of royal duties. A king with us should be able to speak in many languages, because it will become his duty to consort with the princes and nobles of other lands. We were told the other day that the Sultan, when he visited us, needed an interpreter for every word. Were we told the same of a sovereign of our own upon his travels, would not every Englishman feel himself to be disgraced? And a king with us should love that Arab virtue, without which, indeed, no strong feeling of social regard can be created or maintained. To sit at your friend's table, to break his bread, to eat his salt, to drink of his cup, is the very essence of friendship. The world has felt it to be so since the earliest days from which it has sent us a history, or even a tradition. Since Joseph ordered the rich mess for Benjamin, it has been so. It was shown to be so when our Saviour sat at supper with his disciples. A stray philosopher here and there has striven to make us believe that social intercourse should look down on animal wants; but such stray philosophers have had no success. In all countries, and among all

people, "Come and dine with me," is the surest shibboleth of opening friendship. "Stay and sleep, and eat your breakfast," makes the bond the stronger. Private men may, indeed, divorce themselves from the social joy of the salt-cellar, and may do so without neglect of duty. We pity, but do not blame, the man who never bids his friend to sit opposite to him at his board. But with a sovereign it is not so. Such divorce with him would be a divorce, not from pleasure simply, and therefore be cause for no blame,—but would be a divorce from duty, and a ground for deep censure.

That patriotism is a virtue required in all sovereigns will readily be admitted. But as there are different classes of sovereigns, so are there different classes of patriotism fit for differing sovereigns. We all understand the patriarchal patriotism of the despot who speaks and thinks of his country, his people, the glory of his arms, and the greatness of his rule,—as though country, people, arms, and rule were all his very own, to do with them as he pleases. That which we have in our hand, and call our own, we all love. Every man regards even the dog that follows at his heels and is subject to his smallest word. But such patriotism as that, if it be patriotism, is not fitted for a British Sovereign. And we can understand that love of a citizen for his country which a President of a Republic should feel, perhaps, more strongly than other citizens. He is among his brother citizens the first, and is bound to have the welfare of his country specially at heart. But his patriotism is of the same nature with that of other citizens. It is compatible with personal ambition, with desire for change, with political criticism, and with political effort. Nay; if it be genuine it cannot exist without those attributes of action. But the patriotism of a constitutional sovereign must differ from both. It must be a patriotism of self-denial, trusting as much as loving, willing to submit itself to the wisdom of its subjects, accepting the legally expressed wishes of the nation as genuine laws for its own guidance, and conscious of the fact that as loyalty is due from the people to the throne, so is concession due from the sovereign to the people.

We have ventured to say that the duties of sovereignty cannot be neglected without the payment of penalties. As much may probably be said as to all duties and the neglect of them. The higher is the service to be performed, the more distant, the less evident, but still not the less sure, will be the punishment inflicted, if the service be not done. It is easy to dismiss a negligent clerk, but it is not so easy to be rid of a negligent Secretary of State. Of an ill-doing sovereign, or of a sovereign who will do nothing, a nation cannot divest itself without a revolution. With us, kings are so popular and revolutions so unpopular, that, as the throne now stands, we may almost say that nothing that a sovereign could do,—nothing certainly that he could omit to do,—would cause his people to depose him. But not

the less surely would the punishment come, in diminished loyalty, in waning affection, in necessary rebuke, in stern opposition,—which embitters the lives of the great with a severity which those who are humble can never be called upon to feel,—and, lastly, with that undying evil name which every evil prince must dread. To be born and to come to the throne as the bien aimé, and then to go out and be extinguished with the regret of none, amidst the contempt of all! To look forward as old age comes on to such a fate as this! To have to be written of in history as being altogether unworthy of that part in a nation's record which the chance of birth has made a necessity! Surely this is punishment heavy enough; but it is the punishment that comes when it is deserved.

The duties of a constitutional sovereign as we have attempted to describe them are not easy, but they are possible. They may, with care, be fulfilled. So much can hardly be said of the duties either of an Emperor or of a President. To rule a great nation in all things and to rule it fitly is beyond the power of any one man. To do so would require Divine attributes. And the position of an elected President is such that he can hardly hope to remain in unison with his people and his Congress. But there is nothing beyond the scope of human effort imposed by us on our sovereigns; and in return we give a security that has never yet been equalled in regard to any human throne, a splendour which has never been surpassed in its reality, a tranquillity which refutes the proverb as to the necessary aching of the head that wears a crown, and a popularity which makes the grand old Hungarian declaration, the "moriamur pro rege nostro Mariâ Teresâ," the expression of the simple feeling of every British subject. There is no seat for King or Emperor, for Cæsar, Sultan, or for reigning Duke, like to it, nor ever has been, since thrones and dominions were first established on the earth.

TASTE.

The word "Taste" is so equivocal,—signifying partly a sensation and partly a critical discrimination,—that it is not easy to define its full meaning; but though people talk of "good taste" and "bad taste," we purpose to treat of it in the former sense alone, and simply term it,—the thorough appreciation of what is true and beautiful,—and a corresponding dislike of the reverse. For Taste is the product both of feeling and of judgment, and the mere fact of pleasurable emotions being excited by certain objects in nature, or qualities in art, is no evidence of its presence, unless those pleasures are healthy and beneficial. Were taste only the product of feeling, it would be simply an instinct, whereas experience proves that it is more than partially an acquired faculty—needing not only a natural delicacy, but also a discrimination which experience alone can give. Nor does it spring from reason alone, which is but an essential ingredient, to prevent the errors of feeling. Having, moreover, its foundation in the natural love for truth and beauty, it is not liable to change, though it may suffer local depreciation in the overthrow of national prosperity; for, unlike fashion, its dictates are not founded on the mere caprice of the moment, but on a standard erected by the accumulated strength of previous reason and judgment in their highest state of perfection.

Taste selects what is "true and beautiful," and though there may be a diversity of opinion as to what merits the appellation, there can be no doubt that whatever is repugnant to health or comfort must be wrong, and no majority can make it, even for a moment, right, as is the case with regard to the dictates of fashion. For though it has often been asserted that "taste is not to be disputed," the proverb has originated rather in the known prejudices of body or mind than from the dictates of reason; and though it is perfectly true that there are persons who could never acquire a taste for certain articles of food, or for particular qualities in Art,—in either case, the question is one simply of perfect organisation or health; even as some people have no relish for music, owing to a defect in the auricular construction. On the other hand, without agreeing in the decision of "majorities," if we were to investigate the real causes of a man's likes or dislikes, we should find that there is an instinct,—however unreasonable,—which is not to be lightly considered because it may be opposed to the opinions of the educated few. For instance; if a picture be not intelligible to the multitude, whatever may be the

"artistic" qualities, it can never be an instrument for satisfying a natural feeling, but simply for gratifying an acquired desire; and though, as we have already observed, reason and judgment are required to prevent the errors of feeling, yet if the former thoroughly ignores the latter, the result is simply prejudice, and not taste.

Joy is not dependent on taste, but its character is much enhanced by the presence of the latter, and though the pleasure felt by one man in hearing "My pretty Se-usan, don't say no," may be quite equal to the delight produced in another by the performance of Beethoven's "Adelaida," the quality of the pleasure must be estimated by that of the emotions it excites. So, of the pleasure given by a Greuze or a Titian; a "sensational drama" or Shakespeare's *Othello*. In this respect familiarity breeds anything but contempt; and even our appreciation of personal beauty depends almost entirely on the particular forms with which we are intimate. But, though an African may prefer a woman of the Mongolian type to a European, his predilection arises from his very ignorance of other forms with which he might draw a comparison, and the novelty, however exciting, is too abrupt to win immediate admiration. Yet, surely, the fair skin of the European, showing the play of life underneath, must be pronounced more beautiful than that of the Mongolian, owing to its greater sensitiveness in betraying the softest emotions of the inner heart. And even if an African were asked to choose from a bank of flowers that one which pleased him most for its colour, whatever prejudice he may have for a black face, he would assuredly select a blossom of a brighter hue. The elements of beauty in form and colour are grace, delicacy, variety, strength, and repose; but the grace must be free from affectation, the delicacy from weakness, the variety from eccentricity, the strength from coarseness, and the repose from inanity.

The thorough appreciation of natural beauty depends chiefly on feeling, and that of artistic excellence on discrimination. We place music apart,—that most ethereal Art, requiring such a special organisation for its perception that a just estimate of its deepest beauties can never be arrived at through such means as lead us to distinguish the relative qualities in poetry and painting. Even as regards natural beauty, custom materially affects the formation of taste; we become attached to places and things, and are thereby blind to their defects. But this liking or disliking is merely sentiment, and not taste, inasmuch as the result has been produced without reason or reflection to influence our decision; and such prejudice is the greatest enemy of taste.

Our mental progress is so subject to outward influences which momentarily retard it, by leading us to diverge from the straight path, that we must naturally commit many errors before we can arrive at a correct estimate of the various qualities in Art,—mistaking prettiness

for beauty, garishness for brilliancy, labour for completeness, bombast for eloquence, dexterity for power, and even falsehood for truth. Especially fatal is the habit of accepting the excellence of the means as the achievement of the end. We talk of one man having a genius for drawing, another for colour; this musician for melody, and that one for harmony; one writer for imagination, and another for poetic diction; forgetting that genius is a heaven-born power of utterance, the perfection of which is shown in the attainment of the end, and not in a mere display of the means.

The pleasure with which we hail the presence of Realism in Art, is but childish wonder, and little flattering to our reason. The discovery of photography has done much to produce this result, and its influence has not been confined to painting, but has equally affected literature, music, and the drama; and the attempt at a close imitation of the features of nature, at a proportionate loss of its character, has been pernicious to all. The painter has laboured over the minutest blades of grass, the poet or novelist over the objects of a scene, the musician has ignored the high powers of his Art in his endeavours to assimilate vocal utterance to common language, and the dramatic author has sought to win, not unsuccessfully, the applause of the audience by the introduction of real objects on the stage, such as a hansom cab or a pump with real water, rather than by the strength of his plot, or the beauty of his language. The success attending such paltry devices is not indicative of real progress. If the painting and poetry "of the future" is to resemble in character that particular music of the present to which the term has been so impudently applied, posterity is by no means to be envied. When we read such praises bestowed on some clever and popular artists as would scarcely be exceeded in speaking of Shakespeare, Titian, or Mozart, we feel inclined to cry out: "These be your gods, O Israel! behold, they are but stone and wood, and their effulgence is but a tinselled surface." But liberally as the appellation of greatness has been bestowed on the successful labourers in the rising fields of Art, on none has it been more foolishly and unworthily awarded than on the musical composers of the present day. Great musicians, indeed! Real greatness is more rare in music than in any other Art, though its ranks are the most crowded. Great authors and painters we may reckon by the score, but at most only three or four really great musicians; and of all, whatever their profession, we may equally say that, in the presence of their works, we forget the Art employed, and are impressed with a belief that whatever may be the means of utterance, there are some few men sent from heaven to teach us something nobler and more exalting than the mere gratification of mortal desires. Ofttimes a fatal gift, for alas! the celestial fire, unless when stirred in hardest matter, has consumed many of its possessors before manhood has fully been attained.

Of all the causes which materially affect the progress of Art and the formation of taste, popularity is not the least powerful. Though gifted with the highest reasoning power, man shows his affinity to other animals by his indolent following of whatever for the moment is accepted by the many; and if our social, as our future political position is to be under the government of "majorities," the prospect is not captivating. It could be easily proved by a reference to many recent works in literature, art, and music, which have attained a wide popularity, that such a result has not arisen from any greatness of aim in the artist, but solely from an endeavour to excite those feelings which, being the most common, are the most easily aroused. Immersed in our worldly pursuits, in our brief moments of relaxation we for the most part seek to be merely amused; and of those two caterers for public estimation, he who strives to amuse, and he who seeks to instruct his audience, the former will ever be the more popular. But peace of mind is a more healthy state than excitement, nor is loud laughter a sign of the truest happiness;—and so we may estimate the greatness of a work of Art by the particular nature of the emotions it excites. For such feelings as love, charity, veneration, progressing even unto very holiness, are more worthy to be kindled by the literary or artistic preacher than are the wonders aroused by a display of skill, or the laughter excited by sparkling wit. Not that laughter is unholy;—far from it, and a sorry time it would be if human life ever realised that morbid thought of the poet; namely, "Man must work and woman must weep."—Yes, "man," indeed, "must work," for therein shall he find his chief pleasure; and in proportion as his labour contributes to the welfare and happiness of his fellow-creatures shall his work be pronounced great; and, on the contrary, that work shall be regarded as unprofitable which is carried on solely for the purpose of selfish gratification. So far right. But that woman of necessity must weep, could only have been uttered in a strange and momentary forgetfulness of her high destiny. Partner in the joys of man, and the soother of his sorrows, his good genius in health, and his very angel in sickness,—indirectly the maker of his fortunes,—so long as woman obeys the purest instincts of her nature, she need not envy the lot of any man, whatever may be his social position. And though, with a pardonable egotism, and possibly some slight shade of justice, man claims to be lord of the creation, yet, happily, not only is his rule divided, but in the silent wisdom of his heart he gratefully acknowledges the supreme sway of a sovereign mistress, whose counsels, though at times sweetly selfish, he knows well are ever directed with a view to promote his own happiness and welfare.

Allusion has been made to the fallacy of supposing that taste is not to be disputed, and the consequent impossibility of fixing a standard of excellence in Art, or even of natural beauty. But though as regards the

latter, such may be partially the case with respect to the human face, wherein the appreciation is chiefly the effect of national prejudice, yet it will be found that the term "beautiful" will ever be applied by the people of any nation to that shape in the familiar type of features which is not singular in its character, being neither too large nor too small, too curved or too straight, but possessing that golden mean which is most satisfactory to the eye, and in which perfect fitness is best embodied. And this fitness reveals itself more in the expression than in the mere form. The soul peers through the features, and, moreover, imperceptibly moulds their shape, subject to material influences which it cannot wholly control. As a spring, rushing from its source, is forced to shape its course by the nature of the impediments it meets, yet its actual character chiefly depends on the fulness of its hidden force; so expression, though partially affected by the shape of the features, depends upon the character of the feelings which animate it; and thus real beauty is revealed,—not in the colour of the eye or the curve of the mouth, but in the love-kindled light of the former and the peace-breathing smile of the latter, both eloquently interpreting the fulness of the hidden soul.

Nor less erroneous is the maxim that taste in Art is not to be defined; for though minds are differently affected by the representation of joy, sorrow, love, fear, or any other human feeling, yet even as in nature we can easily discriminate between real joy or sorrow, and forced laughter and tears, so in Art we can learn to distinguish the true from the false representation, whether the error be the result of insipidity or of exaggeration; and the more we employ our faculties in acquiring such knowledge, the more likely are we all to converge, though by different routes, to one point, and accept, as the sole standard of excellence in taste, the appreciation of truth, simple and pure.

Not the least perturbing influence in the attainment of taste is the restless desire for the presence of novelty in every art; therefore it is absolutely necessary to estimate its embodiments by their approximation to the true and simple character of nature; for the mind is apt to forget its proper duties if the eye or ear is captivated by some peculiarity of treatment hitherto unknown; and in our natural dislike of what is commonplace, we are prone to forget that the more rationally a subject is treated, and the less the author strays from the path of simplicity, the greater is his genius:—while of true genius eccentricity is no symbol. The highest genius is ever imbued with the largest amount of common-sense; and they err who would link it with waywardness or spasmodic effort. The history of human error should particularly lead us to beware of mere novelty; and the distrust of that specious quality will ever increase in proportion as reason influences the judgment. This is why people who have arrived at manhood are often accused of cynicism, for not appreciating those things which excite the enthusiastic admiration of the young; whereas

this critical and doubting spirit is more often the result of greater experience. Moreover, as the probability of the duration of life becomes more uncertain, we lose the desire to run after novelty, in the hope of therein finding fresh pleasures,—rather keeping to those truths which have ever been a source of pure delight. But it would be folly, on this account, to close our eyes at pictures which do not reach the excellence of Raffaelle or Titian, to avoid the perusal of works which are not equal to Homer or Shakespeare, or to shut our ears against all music which does not approach the beauty and grandeur of Mozart and Beethoven. For the literary or artistic preacher, if he have any beneficial influence, must obtain it by supplying the worthiest wants of the age he lives in; and his eloquence, to be effective, must be appreciable to the intelligence of his audience. Nor does this admiration of the talent of the living artists betoken any want of reverence for the genius of those who have passed away. The sun shines for ever; and though, when some feeble squib of a comet makes its unwonted appearance, all men's eyes are turned in its direction, yet, considering the singular and erratic nature of the celestial visitor, this curiosity may easily be pardoned. Nor, on that account, does the sole fountain of light,—the eternal dispenser of health and wealth,—cease to shed its beneficent influence. So the genius of the past is with us always, whilst new-born talent cries aloud for an immediate recognition. Nor were it just that its prayer should be unheeded; for though it may be perfectly true that in our eager desire to encourage native talent, our attention is often bestowed on works which will not live, yet most assuredly this very fear of the brevity of their existence forms the most rational excuse for our momentary neglect of those works which are surely destined to live for ever.

The productions of literature, painting, and music, must be estimated by the loftiness of the artist's aim, and his power to develop clearly the truths he seeks to unfold; and if, in his efforts to excite attention, he employs any but the simplest means, it proves either a want of acquired power, or else that the truth he would proclaim is of no great importance. Of all feelings, curiosity is the easiest to arouse, and the least worthy to be excited. In general we pay too little attention to the thought, and too much to the language in which it is expressed, so that, like children with bad sweetmeats, we often swallow falsehoods which are made outwardly attractive and palatable. Few critics will deny that the aim of Art of late years,—whether in poetry, painting, or music,—has been directed to the outward setting, rather than to the embodiment of the inward thought; so that we have a peculiarity of treatment,—namely, of versification, colour, and harmony, a striving after various turns of language,—rather than the intelligible expression of truth. Therefore in every art it is well to guard against the mere fascination of the senses. For fascination is very inferior to

admiration, being excited by less worthy causes, and merely affecting the senses, whereas admiration springs from the heart, and is kindled alone by objects worthy of its love.

To what extent this fascination of the senses affects our judgment, may be perceived in the success which invariably attends the exhibition of what may be termed the "bravura" of Art. Whether the instrument be a piano, the voice, a canvas, or a sheet of paper,—the performer who displays rapidity of utterance, the painter who shows facility of execution, and the writer who reveals the most extensive erudition, even in the elucidation of the most trivial theories, will always meet with more liberal applause than awaits a more intellectual appeal. But the feeling produced partakes of astonishment rather than of admiration, and such paltry exhibitions of mere dexterity are wholly repugnant to taste, which appreciates a mental rather than a mechanical display. And yet, however much we may regret the poverty of taste in the audience, the blame must be chiefly awarded to the performer who forgets the duty he owes to Art, in the continual attempt to attain a most ephemeral and unworthy success. For instance, few indeed are the singers who, merely to show their dexterity, will not scruple to interpolate the notes of the composer with a succession of the most unmeaning roulades, shakes, and other mad frolics of the voice, each display followed by louder clapping of hands and showering of bouquets; and not until the performer shall have the wisdom and the courage to resist the promptings of the most paltry vanity, and feel that real executive power is shown in giving full expression to the ideas of the composer, can there be hope of any amendment in the judgment of the public.

Fashion has much influence on the advancement of taste. It has often been allied with the latter, but, so far from there being any affinity, there is, on the contrary, a continual war between the two powers. Fashion, unfortunately, is never under the dominion of taste, and though it may at times retard the progress of the latter, the effect can only be momentary, for it originates in mere caprice, and its laws become obsolete until a future age turns to revivalism; for it learns nothing from experience, and, like history, repeats itself. When Pre-Raffaellitism made its comet-like appearance,—with ugliness and affectation for its satellites,—its influence, soaring or grubbing, according to its admirers or detractors, extended even to manners and dress. Ladies studied to deprive their actions of all natural grace, on the strange plea of naturalism, and their dresses were made after the quaintest fashion of early times. Red hair,—unkempt, in imitation of nature's unadorned simplicity,—became an object of desire, and those who possessed black or brown hair gladly underwent any painful or mortifying process to impart the enviable hue to their swarthy locks. But crinoline swiftly put an end to the affected meagreness of dress, and on a sudden the possessors of dyed hair had the mortification of

finding the trouble they had undergone thrown away, with what detriment to the strength and beauty of the manipulated matter the barber alone can tell. Then crinoline was voted as ugly as before it had been pronounced beautiful, and we seem tending to the short waists and indecently scanty robes worn in the early part of this century, whilst the hideous "chignon" is giving place to the equally preposterous head-gear of the time of Reynolds. Considering the ease with which a woman adapts her opinions to prevailing fashion, and how suddenly her unintellectual admiration is bestowed on what previously excited her disgust, there is really some ground for accusing the sex of the want of a true appreciation of the beautiful;—or, if not an absolute want, at least a fearful weakness. They have all the feeling necessary for the possession of taste, but they want judgment, and while having the sensibility to admire what is pretty or pleasing, they lack the discrimination to select what is really beautiful. And what removes their feeling from taste is its absence of critical power. Moreover, though women are keen in perception, they have less reflection and are more precipitate than men. However graceful and delicate by nature, they allow their judgment to be regulated, in matters of dress, by the dictates of fashion, and grace and fitness lose their proper influence. No doubt, even in dress, there is opportunity given for the display of taste, but it is confined to the choice of colour; for, as to its form, that seems to be definitely left to the caprice and cupidity of the tailors—male and female.

Others, again, err in the opposite direction. They affect to despise fashion, and, either through contempt or indolence, take little pains about their personal appearance; but the contempt is not a sign of a corresponding strength of mind, nor is the indolence a proof of bodily health. The "mens sana in corpore sano" is not the least apparent in the desire to appear clean and neat, and personal experience leads us to believe that the proportional degree of attention paid to outward appearance is a true thermometer of health. So that at times a man may be a sloven, or so sensitive to neatness that the obtrusion of the smallest hair of the beard or moustache becomes highly offensive; and thus we find that people who are on the verge of decay become very slovenly in their habits and dress.

To the influence of Fashion may be chiefly ascribed the proverbial unsteadiness in the advancement of taste in Art. At the call of sundry enthusiastic explorers, we play "follow my leader" in a labyrinth of dogmas and creeds of "idealism," "realism," and other "sophisms," each equally unprofitable, and all retarding our progress by keeping us groping continually in the dark, often for so long a time that we become blind in the presence of light. It is the tendency of all preachers of a new faith to see no merit in any existing doctrines, and to believe that truth can only be found by pursuing a course diametrically opposed to those hitherto followed, so that in proportion

to the faith and unreflecting zeal of the disciple, he plunges into extremes instead of searching some coin of vantage whereby he may reconcile the opposing doctrines, and by accepting the truth and rejecting the errors which may prevail in the respective creeds, discover a sure and safe road to comparative perfection. Unfortunately, pride and obstinacy are obstacles not easily to be overthrown; and any error prevalent in Art is as pertinaciously upheld as are the absurdities of dress. Even when this has reached the last stage of exaggeration, and a reaction ensues, the result, arising from offended feeling rather than from awakening reason, is too violent and abrupt to have a beneficial influence.

Thus, "Idealism" has dethroned "Realism," to be in its turn overthrown when the flaring paint has been rubbed from the doll's surface, and the child is disgusted with the naked deformity beneath. But "Idealism" is not necessary unrealism, nor need "Realism" be wholly material; and though opposed in their extremes, they are not antagonistic in the means. Realism springs from without,—Idealism from within; and the perception would be as narrow without the co-operation of the mind as the conception would be in the entire ignorance of the local truth imparted by the senses. Art is the worshipper of Nature, not its blind devotee, and its mission is to embody the spiritual beauty of its immortal mistress. To that end it must arouse the emotions which the actual presence of Nature awakens, and if we investigate the source of their current, we shall find that it does not spring from a microscopic knowledge of its multitudinous objects; but, on the contrary, the impression produced by the whole will be weakened in proportion as we pry into the minute features of the parts.

Idealism, therefore, is not unrealism, but is the expression of truth of feeling as opposed to that of mere fact, and is thus more elevating than realism, being creative, whereas the latter is merely illustrative. For instance, let us take the representation of any incident in History or Life. There are two methods of pictorial treatment, namely, the Real and the Ideal, taken in their broadest sense. In the former the artist endeavours to represent the scene literally as it occurred, giving to the personages introduced and to its locality, as far as possible their identical features; in the latter the incident is employed more as a means of embodying the character pertaining to the situation, and the painter does not consider the real circumstances of the scene, but in what manner its representation can most impress the spectator. The really great artist is revealed in proportion to his power of grasping the whole subject, and his work, compared to one in which the painter has insisted on local truth, is as far above the latter as autobiography is to a mere diary, the materials of which are employed as the means of arousing a deeper interest than could be excited simply by their real presence. For example, it may not be true that

Cromwell looked on the beheaded Charles in his coffin, as depicted by Paul Delaroche. But the peculiar position of the regicide, the doubt whether the chief obstacle to his ambition was really removed, mingled, possibly, with a regret that necessity had driven him to the act,—all the feelings pertaining to his situation are so strongly embodied in the picture, that the spectator is regardless of the painter's deviation from fact, and the seeming falsehood becomes a real truth.

In acting,—as in painting and literature,—the same antagonism prevails, and Idealism and Realism appear by turns in their zenith,—the true middle course being too tame for the seekers after amusement rather than truth. How far Realism is powerless to awaken emotions in accordance with the scene represented may be proved by the inferiority of a tableau vivant to a pictorial illustration of the same subject, even when not treated in the highest manner. Art is but the mere representation of life, and cannot awaken the spectator's interest to the same extent as if he were a witness of the actual scene, and a judicious mixture of Idealism strengthens the impression which the artist seeks to produce; whereas a too close Realism only makes the unreality more apparent. From the relation of an incident and the knowledge of its attending circumstances, the mind conceives a picture of the real event, and can scarcely be contented with the assertion that the representation is strictly in accordance with the actual scene. The imagination requires to be satisfied, and any idealism which will produce that result is not a falsehood, but the unfolding of a higher truth than could be revealed by the bare illustration of facts.

But the purifying spirit of Idealism, unless restrained by the stern presence of Realism, is apt to lead the mind into the very regions of falsehood;—and even the continual search after the beautiful in Art has a tendency to produce a forgetfulness of other qualities equally essential to truth. The dreams of poets, teeming with illustrations of unalloyed happiness, are not usually realised in life. No doubt the pictures of chaste nymphs and lovely shepherdesses embowered in sunlit landscapes, and occupied in the most innocent pastimes, are sweet to the imagination; but we have realities more serious to attend to, by the embodiment of which Art may contribute to a delight more rational and beneficial; and only to those who have no real knowledge of life will the falsehood of Idealism be more welcome than its truth.

Our space here is too limited to permit of any lengthened inquiry as regards the influence of taste on our social manners and customs. It must, however, be acknowled that our insular pride and self-importance have contributed much to the unfavourable light in which our countrymen are universally regarded by foreigners; who,—especially the lower classes,—are, generally speaking, superior to ourselves in

taste. We possess great tact;—but though tact, like taste, prevents its possessor from giving offence by word or deed, it is exercised from motives of expediency rather than from feeling, and often conceals truth for private ends, thus awakening a suspicion of selfishness. And though after close analysis we may acknowledge that selfishness is literally the foundation of all our acts, yet its degree of virtue or viciousness must be estimated by the amount of benefit or injury it causes to others.

Nor can we even dwell upon the influence of Fashion on the practice of religion. The pliability of women's prejudices has been alluded to, and as they form the majority of the audience in our churches, we need not be surprised that the tinsel of Ritualism at present has more power to fascinate the mind than the sterling metal of a more simple worship.

It may be thought that too much importance has been given to a quality which, demanding an equal degree of intellect and of natural delicacy for its organisation, may be deemed of little practical value to the mass of mankind in general. We think otherwise. The necessities of the mind are as worthy of recognition as are those of the body. And we feel convinced that, whatever may be a man's position or his occupation in life, the acquirement of taste will lead him all the more fully to perform that duty which is the highest privilege of humanity,—namely, by our works to contribute to the delight, the happiness, and the welfare of our fellow-creatures. Taste not only enhances individual enjoyment, but also elevates the national character; for though it may not be solely the offspring, it is the pupil of Reason, and in proportion as it is influenced by the latter, it will mark the relative difference between civilisation and barbarism.

PHINEAS FINN, THE IRISH MEMBER.

CHAPTER I.

PHINEAS FINN PROPOSES TO STAND FOR LOUGHSHANE.

Dr. Finn, of Killaloe, in county Clare, was as well known in those parts,—the confines, that is, of the counties Clare, Limerick, Tipperary, and Galway,—as was the bishop himself who lived in the same town, and was as much respected. Many said that the doctor was the richer man of the two, and the practice of his profession was extended over almost as wide a district. Indeed the bishop, whom he was privileged to attend, although a Roman Catholic, always spoke of their dioceses being conterminate. It will therefore be understood that Dr. Finn,—Malachi Finn was his full name,—had obtained a wide reputation as a country practitioner in the west of Ireland. And he was a man sufficiently well to do, though that boast made by his friends, that he was as warm a man as the bishop, had but little truth to support it. Bishops in Ireland, if they live at home, even in these days, are very warm men; and Dr. Finn had not a penny in the world for which he had not worked hard. He had, moreover, a costly family, five daughters and one son, and, at the time of which we are speaking, no provision in the way of marriage or profession had been made for any of them. Of the one son, Phineas, the hero of the following pages, the mother and five sisters were very proud. The doctor was accustomed to say that his goose was as good as any other man's goose, as far as he could see as yet; but that he should like some very strong evidence before he allowed himself to express an opinion that the young bird partook, in any degree, of the qualities of a swan. From which it may be gathered that Dr. Finn was a man of common-sense.

Phineas had come to be a swan in the estimation of his mother and sisters by reason of certain early successes at college. His father, whose religion was not of that bitter kind in which we in England are apt to suppose that all the Irish Roman Catholics indulge, had sent his son to Trinity; and there were some in the neighbourhood of Killaloe,—patients, probably, of Dr. Duggin, of Castle Connell, a learned physician who had spent a fruitless life in endeavouring to make head against Dr. Finn,—who declared that old Finn would not be sorry if his son were to turn Protestant and go in for a fellowship. Mrs. Finn was a Protestant, and the five Miss Finns were Protestants, and the doctor himself was very much given to dining out among his Pro-

testant friends on a Friday. Our Phineas, however, did not turn Protestant up in Dublin, whatever his father's secret wishes on that subject may have been. He did join a debating society, to success in which his religion was no bar; and he there achieved a sort of distinction which was both easy and pleasant, and which, making its way down to Killaloe, assisted in engendering those ideas as to swanhood of which maternal and sisterly minds are so sweetly susceptible. "I know half a dozen old windbags at the present moment," said the doctor, "who were great fellows at debating clubs when they were boys." "Phineas is not a boy any longer," said Mrs. Finn. "And windbags don't get college scholarships," said Matilda Finn, the second daughter. "But papa always snubs Phinny," said Barbara, the youngest. "I'll snub you, if you don't take care," said the doctor, taking Barbara tenderly by the ear;—for his youngest daughter was the doctor's pet.

The doctor certainly did not snub his son, for he allowed him to go over to London when he was twenty-two years of age, in order that he might read with an English barrister. It was the doctor's wish that his son might be called to the Irish Bar, and the young man's desire that he might go to the English Bar. The doctor so far gave way, under the influence of Phineas himself, and of all the young women of the family, as to pay the usual fee to a very competent and learned gentleman in the Middle Temple, and to allow his son one hundred and fifty pounds per annum for three years. Dr. Finn, however, was still firm in his intention that his son should settle in Dublin, and take the Munster Circuit,—believing that Phineas might come to want home influences and home connections, in spite of the swanhood which was attributed to him.

Phineas eat his terms for three years, and was duly called to the Bar; but no evidence came home as to the acquirement of any considerable amount of law lore, or even as to much law study, on the part of the young aspirant. The learned pundit at whose feet he had been sitting was not especially loud in praise of his pupil's industry, though he did say a pleasant word or two as to his pupil's intelligence. Phineas himself did not boast much of his own hard work when at home during the long vacation. No rumours of expected successes,—of expected professional successes,—reached the ears of any of the Finn family at Killaloe. But, nevertheless, there came tidings which maintained those high ideas in the maternal bosom of which mention has been made, and which were of such sufficient strength to induce the doctor, in opposition to his own judgment, to consent to the continued residence of his son in London. Phineas belonged to an excellent club,—the Reform Club,—and went into very good society. He was hand and glove with the Hon. Laurence Fitzgibbon, the eldest son of Lord Claddagh. He was intimate with Barrington Erle, who had been private secretary,—one of the private secretaries,—to the great Whig

Prime Minister who was lately in but was now out. He had dined three or four times with that great Whig nobleman, the Earl of Brentford. And he had been assured that if he stuck to the English Bar he would certainly do well. Though he might fail to succeed in court or in chambers, he would doubtless have given to him some one of those numerous appointments for which none but clever young barristers are supposed to be fitting candidates. The old doctor yielded for another year, although at the end of the second year he was called upon to pay a sum of three hundred pounds, which was then due by Phineas to creditors in London. When the doctor's male friends in and about Killaloe heard that he had done so, they said that he was doting. Not one of the Miss Finns was as yet married; and, after all that had been said about the doctor's wealth, it was supposed that there would not be above five hundred pounds a year among them all, were he to give up his profession. But the doctor, when he paid that three hundred pounds for his son, buckled to his work again, though he had for twelve months talked of giving up the midwifery. He buckled to again, to the great disgust of Dr. Duggin, who at this time said very ill-natured things about young Phineas.

At the end of the three years Phineas was called to the Bar, and immediately received a letter from his father asking minutely as to his professional intentions. His father recommended him to settle in Dublin, and promised the one hundred and fifty pounds for three more years, on condition that this advice was followed. He did not absolutely say that the allowance would be stopped if the advice were not followed, but that was plainly to be implied. That letter came at the moment of a dissolution of Parliament. Lord de Terrier, the Conservative Prime Minister, who had now been in office for the almost unprecedentedly long period of fifteen months, had found that he could not face continued majorities against him in the House of Commons, and had dissolved the House. Rumour declared that he would have much preferred to resign, and betake himself once again to the easy glories of opposition; but his party had naturally been obdurate with him, and he had resolved to appeal to the country. When Phineas received his father's letter, it had just been suggested to him at the Reform Club that he should stand for the Irish borough of Loughshane.

This proposition had taken Phineas Finn so much by surprise, that when first made to him by Barrington Erle it took his breath away. What! he stand for Parliament, twenty-four years old, with no vestige of property belonging to him, without a penny in his purse, as completely dependent on his father as he was when he first went to school at eleven years of age! And for Loughshane, a little borough in the county Galway, for which a brother of that fine old Irish peer, the Earl of Tulla, had been sitting for the last twenty years,—a fine, high-minded representative of the thorough-going Orange Protestant

feeling of Ireland! And the Earl of Tulla, to whom almost all Loughshane belonged,—or at any rate the land about Loughshane,—was one of his father's staunchest friends! Loughshane is in county Galway, but the Earl of Tulla usually lived at his seat in county Clare, not more than ten miles from Killaloe, and always confided his gouty feet, and the weak nerves of the old countess, and the stomachs of all his domestics, to the care of Dr. Finn. How was it possible that Phineas should stand for Loughshane? From whence was the money to come for such a contest? It was a beautiful dream, a grand idea, lifting Phineas almost off the earth by its glory. When the proposition was first made to him in the smoking-room at the Reform Club by his friend Erle, he was aware that he blushed like a girl, and that he was unable at the moment to express himself plainly,—so great was his astonishment and so great his gratification. But before ten minutes had passed by, while Barrington Erle was still sitting over his shoulder on the club sofa, and before the blushes had altogether vanished, he had seen the improbability of the scheme, and had explained to his friend that the thing could not be done. But to his increased astonishment, his friend made nothing of the difficulties. Loughshane, according to Barrington Erle, was so small a place, that the expense would be very little. There were altogether no more than 807 registered electors. The inhabitants were so far removed from the world, and were so ignorant of the world's good things, that they knew nothing about bribery. The Hon. George Morris, who had sat for the last twenty years, was very unpopular. He had not been near the borough since the last election, he had hardly done more than show himself in Parliament, and had neither given a shilling in the town nor got a place under Government for a single son of Loughshane. "And he has quarrelled with his brother," said Barrington Erle. "The devil he has!" said Phineas. "I thought they always swore by each other." "It's at each other they swear now," said Barrington; "George has asked the Earl for more money, and the Earl has cut up rusty." Then the negotiator went on to explain that the expenses of the election would be defrayed out of a certain fund collected for such purposes, that Loughshane had been chosen as a cheap place, and that Phineas Finn had been chosen as a safe and promising young man. As for qualification, if any question were raised, that should be made all right. An Irish candidate was wanted, and a Roman Catholic. So much the Loughshaners would require on their own account when instigated to dismiss from their service that thorough-going Protestant, the Hon. George Morris. Then "the party,"—by which Barrington Erle probably meant the great man in whose service he himself had become a politician,—required that the candidate should be a safe man, one who would support "the party,"—not a cantankerous, red-hot semi-Fenian, running about to meetings at the Rotunda, and such like, with views

of his own about tenant-right and the Irish Church. "But I have views of my own," said Phineas, blushing again. "Of course you have, my dear boy," said Barrington, clapping him on the back. "I shouldn't come to you unless you had views. But your views and ours are the same, and you're just the lad for Galway. You mightn't have such an opening again in your life, and of course you'll stand for Loughshane." Then the conversation was over, the private secretary went away to arrange some other little matter of the kind, and Phineas Finn was left alone to consider the proposition that had been made to him.

To become a member of the British Parliament! In all those hot contests at the two debating clubs to which he had belonged, this had been the ambition which had moved him. For, after all, to what purpose of their own had those empty debates ever tended? He and three or four others who had called themselves Liberals had been pitted against four or five who had called themselves Conservatives, and night after night they had discussed some ponderous subject without any idea that one would ever persuade another, or that their talking would ever conduce to any action or to any result. But each of these combatants had felt,—without daring to announce a hope on the subject among themselves,—that the present arena was only a trial-ground for some possible greater amphitheatre, for some future debating club in which debates would lead to action, and in which eloquence would have power, even though persuasion might be out of the question.

Phineas certainly had never dared to speak, even to himself, of such a hope. The labours of the Bar had to be encountered before the dawn of such a hope could come to him. And he had gradually learned to feel that his prospects at the Bar were not as yet very promising. As regarded professional work he had been idle, and how then could he have a hope?

And now this thing, which he regarded as being of all things in the world the most honourable, had come to him all at once, and was possibly within his reach! If he could believe Barrington Erle, he had only to lift up his hand, and he might be in Parliament within two months. And who was to be believed on such a subject if not Barrington Erle? This was Erle's especial business, and such a man would not have come to him on such a subject had he not been in earnest, and had he not himself believed in success. There was an opening ready, an opening to this great glory,—if only it might be possible for him to fill it!

What would his father say? His father would of course oppose the plan. And if he opposed his father, his father would of course stop his income. And such an income as it was! Could it be that a man should sit in Parliament and live upon a hundred and fifty pounds a year? Since that payment of his debts he had become again embar-

rassed,—to a slight amount. He owed a tailor a trifle, and a bootmaker a trifle,—and something to the man who sold gloves and shirts; and yet he had done his best to keep out of debt with more than Irish pertinacity, living very closely, breakfasting upon tea and a roll, and dining frequently for a shilling at a luncheon-house up a court near Lincoln's Inn, Where should he dine if the Loughshaners elected him to Parliament? And then he painted to himself a not untrue picture of the probable miseries of a man who begins life too high up on the ladder,—who succeeds in mounting before he has learned how to hold on when he is aloft. For our Phineas Finn was a young man not without sense, —not entirely a windbag. If he did this thing the probability was that he might become utterly a castaway, and go entirely to the dogs before he was thirty. He had heard of penniless men who had got into Parliament, and to whom had come such a fate. He was able to name to himself a man or two whose barks, carrying more sail than they could bear, had gone to pieces among early breakers in this way. But then, would it not be better to go to pieces early than never to carry any sail at all? And there was, at any rate, the chance of success. He was already a barrister, and there were so many things open to a barrister with a seat in Parliament! And as he knew of men who had been utterly ruined by such early mounting, so also did he know of others whose fortunes had been made by happy audacity when they were young. He almost thought that he could die happy if he had once taken his seat in Parliament,—if he had received one letter with those grand initials written after his name on the address. Young men in battle are called upon to lead forlorn hopes. Three fall, perhaps, to one who gets through; but the one who gets through will have the Victoria Cross to carry for the rest of his life. This was his forlorn hope; and as he had been invited to undertake the work, he would not turn from the danger. On the following morning he again saw Barrington Erle by appointment, and then wrote the following letter to his father:—

"*Reform Club, Feb.*, 186—.

"My Dear Father,

"I am afraid that the purport of this letter will startle you, but I hope that when you have finished it you will think that I am right in my decision as to what I am going to do. You are no doubt aware that the dissolution of Parliament will take place at once, and that we shall be in all the turmoil of a general election by the middle of March. I have been invited to stand for Loughshane, and have consented. The proposition has been made to me by my friend Barrington Erle, Mr. Mildmay's private secretary, and has been made on behalf of the Political Committee of the Reform Club. I need hardly say that I should not have thought of such a thing with a less thorough promise of support than this gives me, nor should I think of it now had I not been assured that none of the expense of the

election would fall upon me. Of course I could not have asked you to pay for it.

"But to such a proposition, so made, I have felt that it would be cowardly to give a refusal. I cannot but regard such a selection as a great honour. I own that I am fond of politics, and have taken great delight in their study"—("Stupid young fool!" his father said to himself as he read this)—"and it has been my dream for years past to have a seat in Parliament at some future time." ("Dream! yes; I wonder whether he has ever dreamed what he is to live upon.") "The chance has now come to me much earlier than I have looked for it, but I do not think that it should on that account be thrown away. Looking to my profession, I find that many things are open to a barrister with a seat in Parliament, and that the House need not interfere much with a man's practice." ("Not if he has got to the top of his tree," said the doctor.)

"My chief doubt arose from the fact of your old friendship with Lord Tulla, whose brother has filled the seat for I don't know how many years. But it seems that George Morris must go; or, at least, that he must be opposed by a Liberal candidate. If I do not stand, some one else will, and I should think that Lord Tulla will be too much of a man to make any personal quarrel on such a subject. If he is to lose the borough, why should not I have it as well as another?

"I can fancy, my dear father, all that you will say as to my imprudence, and I quite confess that I have not a word to answer. I have told myself more than once, since last night, that I shall probably ruin myself." ("I wonder whether he has ever told himself that he will probably ruin me also," said the doctor.) "But I am prepared to ruin myself in such a cause. I have no one dependent on me; and, as long as I do nothing to disgrace my name, I may dispose of myself as I please. If you decide on stopping my allowance, I shall have no feeling of anger against you!" ("How very considerate!" said the doctor.) "And in that case I shall endeavour to support myself by my pen. I have already done a little in the magazines.

"Give my best love to my mother and sisters. If you will receive me during the time of the election, I shall see them soon. Perhaps it will be best for me to say that I have positively decided on making the attempt; that is to say, if the Club Committee is as good as its promise. I have weighed the matter all round, and I regard the prize as being so great, that I am prepared to run any risk to obtain it. Indeed, to me, with my views about politics, the running of such a risk is no more than a duty. I cannot keep my hand from the work now that the work has come in the way of my hand. I shall be most anxious to get a line from you in answer to this.

"Your most affectionate son,

"PHINEAS FINN."

I question whether Dr. Finn, when he read this letter, did not feel more of pride than of anger,—whether he was not rather gratified than displeased, in spite of all that his common-sense told him on the subject. His wife and daughters, when they heard the news, were clearly on the side of the young man. Mrs. Finn immediately expressed an opinion that Parliament would be the making of her son, and that everybody would be sure to employ so distinguished a barrister. The girls declared that Phineas ought, at any rate, to have his chance, and almost asserted that it would be brutal in their father to stand in their brother's way. It was in vain that the doctor tried to explain that going into Parliament could not help a young barrister, whatever it might do for one thoroughly established in his profession; that Phineas, if successful at Loughshane, would at once abandon all idea of earning any income,—that the proposition, coming from so poor a man, was a monstrosity,—that such an opposition to the Morris family, coming from a son of his, would be gross ingratitude to Lord Tulla. Mrs. Finn and the girls talked him down, and the doctor himself was almost carried away by something like vanity in regard to his son's future position.

Nevertheless he wrote a letter strongly advising Phineas to abandon the project. But he himself was aware that the letter which he wrote was not one from which any success could be expected. He advised his son, but did not command him. He made no threats as to stopping his income. He did not tell Phineas, in so many words, that he was proposing to make an ass of himself. He argued very prudently against the plan, and Phineas, when he received his father's letter, of course felt that it was tantamount to a paternal permission to proceed with the matter. On the next day he got a letter from his mother full of affection, full of pride,—not exactly telling him to stand for Loughshane by all means, for Mrs. Finn was not the woman to run openly counter to her husband in any advice given by her to their son,—but giving him every encouragement which motherly affection and motherly pride could bestow. "Of course you will come to us," she said, "if you do make up your mind to be member for Loughshane. We shall all of us be so delighted to have you!" Phineas, who had fallen into a sea of doubt after writing to his father, and who had demanded a week from Barrington Erle to consider the matter, was elated to positive certainty by the joint effect of the two letters from home. He understood it all. His mother and sisters were altogether in favour of his audacity, and even his father was not disposed to quarrel with him on the subject.

"I shall take you at your word," he said to Barrington Erle at the club that evening.

"What word?" said Erle, who had too many irons in the fire to be thinking always of Loughshane and Phineas Finn,—or who at any rate did not choose to let his anxiety on the subject be seen.

"About Loughshane."

"All right, old fellow; we shall be sure to carry you through. The Irish writs will be out on the third of March, and the sooner you're there the better."

CHAPTER II.

PHINEAS FINN IS ELECTED FOR LOUGHSHANE.

One great difficulty about the borough vanished in a very wonderful way at the first touch. Dr. Finn, who was a man stout at heart, and by no means afraid of his great friends, drove himself over to Castlemorris to tell his news to the Earl, as soon as he got a second letter from his son declaring his intention of proceeding with the business, let the results be what they might. Lord Tulla was a passionate old man, and the doctor expected that there would be a quarrel;—but he was prepared to face that. He was under no special debt of gratitude to the lord, having given as much as he had taken in the long intercourse which had existed between them;—and he agreed with his son in thinking that if there was to be a Liberal candidate at Loughshane, no consideration of old pill-boxes and gallipots should deter his son Phineas from standing. Other considerations might very probably deter him, but not that. The Earl probably would be of a different opinion, and the doctor felt it to be incumbent on him to break the news to Lord Tulla.

"The devil he is!" said the Earl, when the doctor had told his story. "Then I'll tell you what, Finn, I'll support him."

"You support him, Lord Tulla!"

"Yes;—why shouldn't I support him? I suppose it's not so bad with me in the country that my support will rob him of his chance! I'll tell you one thing for certain, I won't support George Morris."

"But, my lord——"

"Well; go on."

"I've never taken much part in politics myself, as you know; but my boy Phineas is on the other side."

"I don't care a —— for sides. What has my party done for me? Look at my cousin, Dick Morris. There's not a clergyman in Ireland stauncher to them than he has been, and now they've given the deanery of Kilfenora to a man that never had a father, though I condescended to ask for it for my cousin. Let them wait till I ask for anything again." Dr. Finn, who knew all about Dick Morris's debts, and who had heard of his modes of preaching, was not surprised at the decision of the Conservative bestower of Irish Church patronage; but on this subject he said nothing. "And as for George," continued the Earl, "I will never lift my hand again for him. His standing for Loughshane would be quite out of the question. My own tenants

wouldn't vote for him if I were to ask them myself. Peter Blake"—Mr. Peter Blake was the lord's agent—"told me only a week ago that it would be useless. The whole thing is gone, and for my part I wish they'd disfranchise the borough. I wish they'd disfranchise the whole country, and send us a military governor. What's the use of such members as we send? There isn't one gentleman among ten of them. Your son is welcome for me. What support I can give him he shall have, but it isn't much. I suppose he had better come and see me."

The doctor promised that his son should ride over to Castlemorris, and then took his leave,—not specially flattered, as he felt that were his son to be returned, the Earl would not regard him as the one gentleman among ten whom the county might send to leaven the remainder of its members,—but aware that the greatest impediment in his son's way was already removed. He certainly had not gone to Castlemorris with any idea of canvassing for his son, and yet he had canvassed for him most satisfactorily. When he got home he did not know how to speak of the matter otherwise than triumphantly to his wife and daughters. Though he desired to curse, his mouth would speak blessings. Before that evening was over the prospects of Phineas at Loughshane were spoken of with open enthusiasm before the doctor, and by the next day's post a letter was written to him by Matilda, informing him that the Earl was prepared to receive him with open arms. "Papa has been over there and managed it all," said Matilda.

"I'm told George Morris isn't going to stand," said Barrington Erle to Phineas the night before his departure.

"His brother won't support him. His brother means to support me," said Phineas.

"That can hardly be so."

"But I tell you it is. My father has known the Earl these twenty years, and has managed it."

"I say, Finn, you're not going to play us a trick, are you?" said Mr. Erle, with something like dismay in his voice.

"What sort of trick?"

"You're not coming out on the other side?"

"Not if I know it," said Phineas, proudly. "Let me assure you I wouldn't change my views in politics either for you or for the Earl, though each of you carried seats in your breeches pockets. If I go into Parliament, I shall go there as a sound Liberal,—not to support a party, but to do the best I can for the country. I tell you so, and I shall tell the Earl the same."

Barrington Erle turned away in disgust. Such language was to him simply disgusting. It fell upon his ears as false maudlin sentiment falls on the ears of the ordinary honest man of the world. Barrington Erle was a man ordinarily honest. He would not have

been untrue to his mother's brother, William Mildmay, the great Whig Minister of the day, for any earthly consideration. He was ready to work with wages or without wages. He was really zealous in the cause, not asking very much for himself. He had some undefined belief that it was much better for the country that Mr. Mildmay should be in power than that Lord de Terrier should be there. He was convinced that Liberal politics were good for Englishmen, and that Liberal politics and the Mildmay party were one and the same thing. It would be unfair to Barrington Erle to deny to him some praise for patriotism. But he hated the very name of independence in Parliament, and when he was told of any man, that that man intended to look to measures and not to men, he regarded that man as being both unstable as water and dishonest as the wind. No good could possibly come from such a one, and much evil might and probably would come. Such a politician was a Greek to Barrington Erle, from whose hands he feared to accept even the gift of a vote. Parliamentary hermits were distasteful to him, and dwellers in political caves were regarded by him with aversion as being either knavish or impractical. With a good Conservative opponent he could shake hands almost as readily as with a good Whig ally; but the man who was neither flesh nor fowl was odious to him. According to his theory of parliamentary government, the House of Commons should be divided by a marked line, and every member should be required to stand on one side of it or on the other. "If not with me, at any rate be against me," he would have said to every representative of the people in the name of the great leader whom he followed. He thought that debates were good, because of the people outside,—because they served to create that public opinion which was hereafter to be used in creating some future House of Commons; but he did not think it possible that any vote should be given on a great question, either this way or that, as the result of a debate; and he was certainly assured in his own opinion that any such changing of votes would be dangerous, revolutionary, and almost unparliamentary. A member's vote,—except on some small crotchety open question thrown out for the amusement of crotchety members,—was due to the leader of that member's party. Such was Mr. Erle's idea of the English system of Parliament, and, lending semi-official assistance as he did frequently to the introduction of candidates into the House, he was naturally anxious that his candidates should be candidates after his own heart. When, therefore, Phineas Finn talked of measures and not men, Barrington Erle turned away in open disgust. But he remembered the youth and extreme rawness of the lad, and he remembered also the careers of other men.

Barrington Erle was forty, and experience had taught him something. After a few seconds, he brought himself to think mildly of the young man's vanity,—as of the vanity of a plunging colt who resents

the liberty even of a touch. "By the end of the first session the thong will be cracked over his head, as he patiently assists in pulling the coach up hill, without producing from him even a flick of his tail," said Barrington Erle to an old parliamentary friend.

"If he were to come out after all on the wrong side," said the parliamentary friend.

Erle admitted that such a trick as that would be unpleasant, but he thought that old Lord Tulla was hardly equal to so clever a stratagem.

Phineas went to Ireland, and walked over the course at Longhshane. He called upon Lord Tulla, and heard that venerable nobleman talk a great deal of nonsense. To tell the truth of Phineas, I must confess that he wished to talk the nonsense himself; but the Earl would not hear him, and put him down very quickly. "We won't discuss politics, if you please, Mr. Finn; because, as I have already said, I am throwing aside all political considerations." Phineas, therefore, was not allowed to express his views on the government of the country in the Earl's sitting-room at Castlemorris. There was, however, a good time coming; and so, for the present, he allowed the Earl to ramble on about the sins of his brother George, and the want of all proper pedigree on the part of the new Dean of Kilfenora. The conference ended with an assurance on the part of Lord Tulla that if the Loughshaners chose to elect Mr. Phineas Finn he would not be in the least offended. The electors did elect Mr. Phineas Finn,—perhaps for the reason given by one of the Dublin Conservative papers, which declared that it was all the fault of the Carlton Club in not sending a proper candidate. There was a great deal said about the matter, both in London and Dublin, and the blame was supposed to fall on the joint shoulders of George Morris and his elder brother. In the meantime, our hero, Phineas Finn, had been duly elected member of Parliament for the borough of Loughshane.

The Finn family could not restrain their triumphings at Killaloe, and I do not know that it would have been natural had they done so. A gosling from such a flock does become something of a real swan by getting into Parliament. The doctor had his misgivings,—had great misgivings, fearful forebodings; but there was the young man elected, and he could not help it. He could not refuse his right hand to his son or withdraw his paternal assistance because that son had been specially honoured among the young men of his country. So he pulled out of his hoard what sufficed to pay off outstanding debts,—they were not heavy,—and undertook to allow Phineas two hundred and fifty pounds a year as long as the session should last.

There was a widow lady living at Killaloe who was named Mrs. Flood Jones, and she had a daughter. She had a son also, born to inherit the property of the late Floscabel Flood Jones, of Floodborough, as soon as that property should have disembarrassed itself; but with

but tell himself that the chances were twenty to one against him. Now, that he looked nearer at it all, the difficulties loomed larger than ever, and the rewards seemed to be less, more difficult of approach, and more evanescent. How many members were there who could never get a hearing! How many who only spoke to fail! How many, who spoke well, who could speak to no effect as far as their own worldly prospects were concerned! He had already known many members of Parliament to whom no outward respect or sign of honour was ever given by any one; and it seemed to him, as he thought over it, that Irish members of Parliament were generally treated with more indifference than any others. There were O'B—— and O'C—— and O'D——, for whom no one cared a straw, who could hardly get men to dine with them at the club, and yet they were genuine members of Parliament. Why should he ever be better than O'B——, or O'C——, or O'D——? And in what way should he begin to be better? He had an idea of the fashion after which it would be his duty to strive that he might excel those gentlemen. He did not give any of them credit for much earnestness in their country's behalf, and he was minded to be very earnest. He would go to his work honestly and conscientiously, determined to do his duty as best he might, let the results to himself be what they would. This was a noble resolution, and might have been pleasant to him,—had he not remembered that smile of derision which had come over his friend Erle's face when he declared his intention of doing his duty to his country as a Liberal, and not of supporting a party. O'B—— and O'C—— and O'D—— were keen enough to support their party, only they were sometimes a little astray at knowing which was their party for the nonce. He knew that Erle and such men would despise him if he did not fall into the regular groove,—and if the Barrington Erles despised him, what would then be left for him?

His moody thoughts were somewhat dissipated when he found one Laurence Fitzgibbon,—the Honourable Laurence Fitzgibbon,—a special friend of his own, and a very clever fellow, on board the boat as it steamed out of Kingston harbour. Laurence Fitzgibbon had also just been over about his election, and had been returned as a matter of course for his father's county. Laurence Fitzgibbon had sat in the House for the last fifteen years, and was yet wellnigh as young a man as any in it. And he was a man altogether different from the O'B——s, O'C——s, and O'D——s. Laurence Fitzgibbon could always get the ear of the House if he chose to speak, and his friends declared that he might have been high up in office long since if he would have taken the trouble to work. He was a welcome guest at the houses of the very best people, and was a friend of whom any one might be proud. It had for two years been a feather in the cap of Phineas that he knew Laurence Fitzgibbon. And yet people said that

Laurence Fitzgibbon had nothing of his own, and men wondered how he lived. He was the youngest son of Lord Claddagh, an Irish peer with a large family, who could do nothing for Laurence, his favourite child, beyond finding him a seat in Parliament.

"Well, Finn, my boy," said Laurence, shaking hands with the young member on board the steamer, "so you've made it all right at Loughshane." Then Phineas was beginning to tell all the story, the wonderful story, of George Morris and the Earl of Tulla,—how the men of Loughshane had elected him without opposition; how he had been supported by Conservatives as well as Liberals;—how unanimous Loughshane had been in electing him, Phineas Finn, as its representative. But Mr. Fitzgibbon seemed to care very little about all this, and went so far as to declare that those things were accidents which fell out sometimes one way and sometimes another, and were altogether independent of any merit or demerit on the part of the candidate himself. And it was marvellous and almost painful to Phineas that his friend Fitzgibbon should accept the fact of his membership with so little of congratulation,—with absolutely no blowing of trumpets whatever. Had he been elected a member of the municipal corporation of Loughshane, instead of its representative in the British Parliament, Laurence Fitzgibbon could not have made less fuss about it. Phineas was disappointed, but he took the cue from his friend too quickly to show his disappointment. And when, half an hour after their meeting, Fitzgibbon had to be reminded that his companion was not in the House during the last session, Phineas was able to make the remark as though he thought as little about the House as did the old-accustomed member himself.

"As far as I can see as yet," said Fitzgibbon, "we are sure to have seventeen."

"Seventeen?" said Phineas, not quite understanding the meaning of the number quoted.

"A majority of seventeen. There are four Irish counties and three Scotch which haven't returned as yet; but we know pretty well what they'll do. There's a doubt about Tipperary, of course; but whichever gets in of the seven who are standing, it will be a vote on our side. Now the Government can't live against that. The uphill strain is too much for them."

"According to my idea, nothing can justify them in trying to live against a majority."

"That's gammon. When the thing is so equal, anything is fair. But you see they don't like it. Of course there are some among them as hungry as we are; and Dubby would give his toes and fingers to remain in." Dubby was the ordinary name by which, among friends and foes, Mr. Daubeny was known; Mr. Daubeny, who at that time was the leader of the Conservative party in the House of Commons. "But most of them," continued Mr. Fitzgibbon, "prefer the other

game, and if you don't care about money, upon my word it's the pleasanter game of the two."

"But the country gets nothing done by a Tory Government."

"As to that, it's six of one and half a dozen of the other. I never knew a government yet that wanted to do anything. Give a government a real strong majority, as the Tories used to have half a century since, and as a matter of course it will do nothing. Why should it? Doing things, as you call it, is only bidding for power,—for patronage and pay."

"And is the country to have no service done?"

"The country gets quite as much service as it pays for,—and perhaps a little more. The clerks in the offices work for the country. And the Ministers work too, if they've got anything to manage. There is plenty of work done;—but of work in Parliament, the less the better, according to my ideas. It's very little that ever is done, and that little is generally too much."

"But the people——"

"Come down and have a glass of brandy-and-water, and leave the people alone for the present. The people can take care of themselves a great deal better than we can take care of them." Mr. Fitzgibbon's doctrine as to the commonwealth was very different from that of Barrington Erle, and was still less to the taste of the new member. Barrington Erle considered that his leader, Mr. Mildmay, should be entrusted to make all necessary changes in the laws, and that an obedient House of Commons should implicitly obey that leader in authorising all changes proposed by him;—but, according to Barrington Erle, such changes should be numerous and of great importance, and would, if duly passed into law at his lord's behest, gradually produce such a Whig Utopia in England as has never yet been seen on the face of the earth. Now, according to Mr. Fitzgibbon, the present Utopia would be good enough,—if only he himself might be once more put into possession of a certain semi-political place about the Court, from which he had heretofore drawn £1,000 per annum, without any work, much to his comfort. He made no secret of his ambition, and was chagrined simply at the prospect of having to return to his electors before he could enjoy those good things which he expected to receive from the undoubted majority of seventeen, which had been, or would be, achieved.

"I hate all change as a rule," said Fitzgibbon; "but, upon my word, we ought to alter that. When a fellow has got a crumb of comfort, after waiting for it years and years, and perhaps spending thousands in elections, he has to go back and try his hand again at the last moment, merely in obedience to some antiquated prejudice. Look at poor Jack Bond,—the best friend I ever had in the world. He was wrecked upon that rock for ever. He spent every shilling he had in contesting Romford three times running,—and three times

running he got in. Then they made him Vice-Comptroller of the Granaries, and I'm shot if he didn't get spilt at Romford on standing for his re-election!"

"And what became of him?"

"God knows. I think I heard that he married an old woman and settled down somewhere. I know he never came up again. Now, I call that a confounded shame. I suppose I'm safe down in Mayo, but there's no knowing what may happen in these days."

As they parted at Euston Square, Phineas asked his friend some little nervous question as to the best mode of making a first entrance into the House. Would Laurence Fitzgibbon see him through the difficulties of the oath-taking? But Laurence Fitzgibbon made very little of the difficulty. "Oh;—you just come down, and there'll be a rush of fellows, and you'll know everybody. You'll have to hang about for an hour or so, and then you'll get pushed through. There isn't time for much ceremony after a general election."

Phineas reached London early in the morning, and went home to bed for an hour or so. The House was to meet on that very day, and he intended to begin his parliamentary duties at once if he should find it possible to get some one to accompany him. He felt that he should lack courage to go down to Westminster Hall all alone, and explain to the policeman and door-keepers that he was the man who had just been elected member for Loughshane. So about noon he went into the Reform Club, and there he found a great crowd of men, among whom there was a plentiful sprinkling of members. Erle saw him in a moment, and came to him with congratulations.

"So you're all right, Finn," said he.

"Yes; I'm all right,—I didn't have much doubt about it when I went over."

"I never heard of a fellow with such a run of luck," said Erle. "It's just one of those flukes that occur once in a dozen elections. Any one on earth might have got in without spending a shilling."

Phineas didn't at all like this. "I don't think any one could have got in," said he, "without knowing Lord Tulla."

"Lord Tulla was nowhere, my dear boy, and could have nothing to say to it. But never mind that. You meet me in the lobby at two. There'll be a lot of us there, and we'll go in together. Have you seen Fitzgibbon?" Then Barrington Erle went off to other business, and Finn was congratulated by other men. But it seemed to him that the congratulations of his friends were not hearty. He spoke to some men, of whom he thought that he knew they would have given their eyes to be in Parliament;—and yet they spoke of his success as being a very ordinary thing. "Well, my boy, I hope you like it," said one middle-aged gentleman whom he had known ever since he came up to London. "The difference is between working for nothing and working for money. You'll have to work for nothing now."

"That's about it, I suppose," said Phineas.

"They say the House is a comfortable club," said the middle-aged friend, "but I confess that I shouldn't like being rung away from my dinner myself."

At two punctually Phineas was in the lobby at Westminster, and then he found himself taken into the House with a crowd of other men. The old and young, and they who were neither old nor young, were mingled together, and there seemed to be very little respect of persons. On three or four occasions there was some cheering when a popular man or a great leader came in; but the work of the day left but little clear impression on the mind of the young member. He was confused, half elated, half disappointed, and had not his wits about him. He found himself constantly regretting that he was there; and as constantly telling himself that he, hardly yet twenty-five, without a shilling of his own, had achieved an entrance into that assembly which by the consent of all men is the greatest in the world, and which many of the rich magnates of the country had in vain spent heaps of treasure in their endeavours to open to their own footsteps. He tried hard to realise what he had gained, but the dust and the noise and the crowds and the want of something august to the eye were almost too strong for him. He managed, however, to take the oath early among those who took it, and heard the Queen's speech read and the Address moved and seconded. He was seated very uncomfortably, high up on a back seat, between two men whom he did not know; and he found the speeches to be very long. He had been in the habit of seeing such speeches reported in about a column, and he thought that these speeches must take at least four columns each. He sat out the debate on the Address till the House was adjourned, and then he went away to dine at his club. He did go into the dining-room of the House, but there was a crowd there, and he found himself alone,—and to tell the truth, he was afraid to order his dinner.

The nearest approach to a triumph which he had in London came to him from the glory which his election reflected upon his landlady. She was a kindly good motherly soul, whose husband was a journeyman law-stationer, and who kept a very decent house in Great Marlborough Street. Here Phineas had lodged since he had been in London, and was a great favourite. "God bless my soul, Mr. Phineas," said she, "only think of your being a member of Parliament!"

"Yes, I'm a member of Parliament, Mrs. Bunce."

"And you'll go on with the rooms the same as ever? Well, I never thought to have a member of Parliament in 'em."

Mrs. Bunce really had realised the magnitude of the step which her lodger had taken, and Phineas was grateful to her.

CHAPTER IV.

LADY LAURA STANDISH.

PHINEAS, in describing Lady Laura Standish to Mary Flood Jones at Killaloe, had not painted her in very glowing colours. Nevertheless he admired Lady Laura very much, and she was worthy of admiration. It was probably the greatest pride of our hero's life that Lady Laura Standish was his friend, and that she had instigated him to undertake the risk of parliamentary life. Lady Laura was intimate also with Barrington Erle, who was, in some distant degree, her cousin; and Phineas was not without a suspicion that his selection for Loughshane, from out of all the young liberal candidates, may have been in some degree owing to Lady Laura's influence with Barrington Erle. He was not unwilling that it should be so; for though, as he had repeatedly told himself, he was by no means in love with Lady Laura,—who was, as he imagined, somewhat older than himself,—nevertheless, he would feel gratified at accepting anything from her hands, and he felt a keen desire for some increase to those ties of friendship which bound them together. No;—he was not in love with Lady Laura Standish. He had not the remotest idea of asking her to be his wife. So he told himself, both before he went over for his election, and after his return. When he had found himself in a corner with poor little Mary Flood Jones, he had kissed her as a matter of course; but he did not think that he could, in any circumstances, be tempted to kiss Lady Laura. He supposed that he was in love with his darling little Mary,—after a fashion. Of course, it could never come to anything, because of the circumstances of his life, which were so imperious to him. He was not in love with Lady Laura, and yet he hoped that his intimacy with her might come to much. He had more than once asked himself how he would feel when somebody else came to be really in love with Lady Laura,—for she was by no means a woman to lack lovers,—when some one else should be in love with her, and be received by her as a lover; but this question he had never been able to answer. There were many questions about himself which he usually answered by telling himself that it was his fate to walk over volcanoes. "Of course, I shall be blown into atoms some fine day," he would say; "but, after all, that is better than being slowly boiled down into pulp."

The House had met on a Friday, again on the Saturday morning, and the debate on the Address had been adjourned till the Monday. On the Sunday, Phineas determined that he would see Lady Laura. She professed to be always at home on Sunday, and from three to four in the afternoon her drawing-room would probably be half full of people. There would, at any rate, be comers and goers, who would prevent anything like real conversation between himself and her. But

for a few minutes before that he might probably find her alone, and he was most anxious to see whether her reception of him, as a member of Parliament, would be in any degree warmer than that of his other friends. Hitherto he had found no such warmth since he came to London, excepting that which had glowed in the bosom of Mrs. Bunce.

Lady Laura Standish was the daughter of the Earl of Brentford, and was the only remaining lady of the Earl's family. The Countess had been long dead; and Lady Emily, the younger daughter, who had been the great beauty of her day, was now the wife of a Russian nobleman whom she had persisted in preferring to any of her English suitors, and lived at St. Petersburgh. There was an aunt, old Lady Laura, who came up to town about the middle of May; but she was always in the country except for some six weeks in the season. There was a certain Lord Chiltern, the Earl's son and heir, who did indeed live at the family town house in Portman Square; but Lord Chiltern was a man of whom Lady Laura's set did not often speak, and Phineas, frequently as he had been at the house, had never seen Lord Chiltern there. He was a young nobleman of whom various accounts were given by various people; but I fear that the account most readily accepted in London attributed to him a great intimacy with affairs of Newmarket, and a partiality for convivial pleasures. Respecting Lord Chiltern Phineas had never as yet exchanged a word with Lady Laura. With the father he was acquainted, as he had dined perhaps half a dozen times at the house. The point in Lord Brentford's character which had more than any other struck our hero, was the unlimited confidence which he seemed to place in his daughter. Lady Laura seemed to have perfect power of doing what she pleased. She was much more mistress of herself than if she had been the wife instead of the daughter of the Earl of Brentford,—and she seemed to be quite as much mistress of the house.

Phineas had declared at Killaloe that Lady Laura was six feet high, that she had red hair, that her figure was straggling, and that her hands and feet were large. She was in fact about five feet seven in height, and she carried her height well. There was something of nobility in her gait, and she seemed thus to be taller than her inches. Her hair was in truth red,—of a deep thorough redness. Her brother's hair was the same; and so had been that of her father, before it had become sandy with age. Her sister's had been of a soft auburn tone, and hers had been said to be the prettiest head of hair in Europe at the time of her marriage. But in these days we have got to like red hair, and Lady Laura's was not supposed to stand in the way of her being considered a beauty. Her face was very fair, though it lacked that softness which we all love in women. Her eyes, which were large and bright, and very clear, never seemed to quail, never rose and sank or showed themselves to be afraid of

their own power. Indeed, Lady Laura Standish had nothing of fear about her. Her nose was perfectly cut, but was rather large, having the slightest possible tendency to be aquiline. Her mouth also was large, but was full of expression, and her teeth were perfect. Her complexion was very bright, but in spite of its brightness she never blushed. The shades of her complexion were set and steady. Those who knew her said that her heart was so fully under command that nothing could stir her blood to any sudden motion. As to that accusation of straggling which had been made against her, it had sprung from ill-natured observation of her modes of sitting. She never straggled when she stood or walked; but she would lean forward, when sitting, as a man does, and would use her arms in talking, and would put her hand over her face, and pass her fingers through her hair,—after the fashion of men rather than of women;—and she seemed to despise that soft quiescence of her sex in which are generally found so many charms. Her hands and feet were large,—as was her whole frame. Such was Lady Laura Standish; and Phineas Finn had been untrue to himself and to his own appreciation of the lady when he had described her in disparaging terms to Mary Flood Jones. But, though he had spoken of Lady Laura in disparaging terms, he had so spoken of her as to make Miss Flood Jones quite understand that he thought a great deal about Lady Laura.

And now, early on the Sunday, he made his way to Portman Square in order that he might learn whether there might be any sympathy for him there. Hitherto he had found none. Everything had been terribly dry and hard, and he had gathered as yet none of the fruit which he had expected that his good fortune would bear for him. It is true that he had not as yet gone among any friends, except those of his club, and men who were in the House along with him;—and at the club it might be that there were some who envied him his good fortune, and others who thought nothing of it because it had been theirs for years. Now he would try a friend who, he hoped, could sympathise; and therefore he called in Portman Square at about half-past two on the Sunday morning. Yes,—Lady Laura was in the drawing-room. The hall-porter admitted as much, but evidently seemed to think that he had been disturbed from his dinner before his time. Phineas did not care a straw for the hall-porter. If Lady Laura were not kind to him, he would never trouble that hall-porter again. He was especially sore at this moment because a valued friend, the barrister with whom he had been reading for the last three years, had spent the best part of an hour that Sunday morning in proving to him that he had as good as ruined himself. "When I first heard it, of course I thought you had inherited a fortune," said Mr. Low. "I have inherited nothing," Phineas replied;—"not a penny; and I never shall." Then Mr. Low had opened his eyes very wide, and shaken his head very sadly, and had whistled.

"I am so glad you have come, Mr. Finn," said Lady Laura, meeting Phineas half-way across the large room.

"Thanks," said he, as he took her hand.

"I thought that perhaps you would manage to see me before any one else was here."

"Well;—to tell the truth, I have wished it; though I can hardly tell why."

"I can tell you why, Mr. Finn. But never mind;—come and sit down. I am so very glad that you have been successful;—so very glad. You know I told you that I should never think much of you if you did not at least try it."

"And therefore I did try."

"And have succeeded. Faint heart, you know, never did any good. I think it is a man's duty to make his way into the House;—that is, if he ever means to be anybody. Of course it is not every man who can get there by the time that he is five-and-twenty."

"Every friend that I have in the world says that I have ruined myself."

"No;—I don't say so," said Lady Laura.

"And you are worth all the others put together. It is such a comfort to have some one to say a cheery word to one."

"You shall hear nothing but cheery words here. Papa shall say cheery words to you that shall be better than mine, because they shall be weighted with the wisdom of age. I have heard him say twenty times that the earlier a man goes into the House the better. There is so much to learn."

"But your father was thinking of men of fortune."

"Not at all;—of younger brothers, and barristers, and of men who have their way to make, as you have. Let me see,—can you dine here on Wednesday? There will be no party, of course, but papa will want to shake hands with you; and you legislators of the Lower House are more easily reached on Wednesdays than on any other day."

"I shall be delighted," said Phineas, feeling, however, that he did not expect much sympathy from Lord Brentford.

"Mr. Kennedy dines here;—you know Mr. Kennedy, of Loughlinter; and we will ask your friend Mr. Fitzgibbon. There will be nobody else. As for catching Barrington Erle, that is out of the question at such a time as this."

"But, going back to my being ruined——" said Phineas, after a pause.

"Don't think of anything so disagreeable."

"You must not suppose that I am afraid of it. I was going to say that there are worse things than ruin,—or, at any rate, than the chance of ruin. Supposing that I have to emigrate and skin sheep, what does it matter? I myself, being unencumbered, have myself as

my own property to do what I like with. With Nelson it was Westminster Abbey or a peerage. With me it is parliamentary success or sheep-skinning."

"There shall be no sheep-skinning, Mr. Finn. I will guarantee you."

"Then I shall be safe."

At that moment the door of the room was opened, and a man entered with quick steps, came a few yards in, and then retreated, slamming the door after him. He was a man with thick short red hair, and an abundance of very red beard. And his face was red,—and, as it seemed to Phineas, his very eyes. There was something in the countenance of the man which struck him almost with dread,—something approaching to ferocity.

There was a pause a moment after the door was closed, and then Lady Laura spoke. "It was my brother Chiltern. I do not think that you have ever met him."

SAINT PAULS.

NOVEMBER, 1867.

ALL FOR GREED.

CHAPTER V.

POOR MONSIEUR RICHARD'S RICHES.

THE effect produced by such a tragedy in a little place like D——, does not require to be described. For twenty miles round it spread its terror; but in the centre of action itself, it exercised a vivifying power. The collective life of D—— was quintupled. Every one's mind was busy upon the same subject, and at the same time. If a conversation began on any other topic, it was sure, before five minutes were over, to find its way round to the assassination of Martin Prévost; and, whether they who conversed were peasants or shopkeepers, you would have been equally astonished, had you overheard them, to note the extraordinary aptitude of all for the discharge of duties appertaining to the police. Each man,—and, for that matter, each woman, too,—had his or her notion about the murderer, and was the inventor of a trap in which the criminal must be infallibly caught, and which, on the part of the said inventor, proved a wiliness, a depth of calculation, and an instinct of the manners and ways of crime, that, so far as the moral condition of this rural population was concerned, was not pleasant. The officers of justice only seemed gifted with true administrative dulness, and the process of "instruction," as it is called, elicited, as it dragged on its pedantic course, remarks not flattering to judicial sharpness from the public. For the public knew everything, however secret; and, above all, whatever was surrounded with unusual precautions as to secrecy. The greffier of the Juge de Paix talked to his wife; the Maire talked to his married daughter; the huissier du tribunal confided in his bonne; the doctor who had examined the body transmitted his impressions to all his patients; and all the dévotes discussed the matter with Monsieur le Curé and his Vicaire. Then the beadle, who was married to Madelon, the Maire's cook, and the sacristan, whose wife collected the money for

the chairs during divine service, and was charwoman twice a week at the private establishment of the principal grocer,—all these served as so many channels of communication, and from conduit to conduit conveyed the whole current of information from its head source in the cabinet of the Juge d'Instruction down to the kitchen of the humblest ménagère. But the worst of all was the brigadier de gendarmerie. This official, by name Frédérick Herrenschmidt, a gigantic Alsatian, was the devoted and pretty well avowed suitor of Madame Jean; and from "Monsieur Frédéri," as she styled him, awful as he might be to the general public of D——, she contrived to extract the minutest details. Madame Jean was reputed a rich woman, and being the widow of a lazy drunkard, to whom she was married twenty-five years back, and whose backslidings she had brooded over during a twenty years' widowhood, she had never brought herself to trust sufficiently any "man of woman born," to resign to him the disposal of her little fortune. "Sophie," as her dead master (but he alone) called her, had been the presiding genius of the Prévost household for a quarter of a century, and had never cheated old Martin of one sou. She made his interest hers, because he had made hers his; and by dint of placing, as he had done, here a hundred francs, and there a hundred francs of her savings during this long space of time, Madame Jean was possessed of somewhere about the sum of twenty thousand francs, and this wealth of hers was the cause that, court her as he might, she could not make up her mind to marry the gendarme. Madame Jean was a fine bold specimen of a strong-nerved French female of forty-five; but though her vanity was well developed, her caution and covetousness overtopped it. She liked to overawe the wives and maidens of D—— as the sharer of the military authority of the place, and she not only tolerated, but exacted the utmost homage of Monsieur Frédéri; but to take him, for better for worse, was what she could not resolve to do, for she had a shrewd notion that however much a union with this stalwart son of Mars might be the better for her, it would probably be the worse for her money. So Madame Jean, who had no human being to leave her riches to, and who never spent anything, but went on saving, refused to become Madame Herrenschmidt, but reigned supreme over the soul of the brigadier, and was possessed of all the knowledge he had no business to impart.

Whatever her other faults, Madame Jean had all the helpfulness of a Frenchwoman, and, had it not been for her care and activity and sense, poor Monsieur Richard would have died, or gone mad, from the effect of his uncle's sudden and terrible death. Richard Prévost was no hero,—that the reader scarcely requires to be told,—and since it was proved to him that the house he inhabited had been broken into, that an assassin had actually passed before the door of the room in which he slept, in order to creep up the stairs and enter his uncle's room immediately over his head, the unfortunate young man seemed

possessed by the idea that the same thing might happen again any day, and that the next victim would inevitably be himself.

"You don't expect me to come and sleep in your room, do you," cried Madame Jean, hoping to rouse him by indignation, "as Prosper's wife used to do when you were a little child?"

"Certainly not, my dear Madame Jean; but I cannot help thinking that it would be a proper precaution if the brigadier were to sleep in the house."

At this Madame Jean drew herself up, as though she had been already the gendarme's lawful spouse, and told Monsieur Richard that he was ignorant of the stern obligations of le devoir militaire!

"Nicolas can sleep in the passage," suggested she. Nicolas was the out-door man.

"Nicolas?" was the distrustful reply.

"Well, you don't think he would let himself be killed and carried away without making a noise, do you?"

But Monsieur Richard shook his head and seemed to incline towards a totally different kind of alarm, at which Madame Jean exclaimed—"For shame! it is unchristianlike and unlawful to be suspecting everybody in that way. Why, Monsieur Richard, there's no end to that kind of thing! You'll be suspecting me, next! Poor old Prosper!—though I never liked him with his nasty underhand sulky ways—still, I do feel for him now."

"So do I," rejoined Richard; "but you cannot say I have done or said anything to incriminate him; for, strange to say, from the very first, something seemed to tell me that the man was not guilty."

"And I believe you are quite right, Monsieur Richard." And, coming nearer to him, and speaking cautiously, "I happen to know," added Madame Jean, "that there is not so much as the shadow of a proof;—nay, more—there's no ground on which you can rest even a suspicion touching Prosper Morel. I have no business to go revealing all this; but I do know it, and I go out of my direct duty to tell it you because your nerves are all jarred and out of order by this dreadful event, and it may comfort you to know that you have not had an assassin going about the house. You might get into a way of suspecting everybody. Your nerves are terribly shattered."

"Yes, they are; you are right there; but surely there has been enough to shake the nerves of a stronger man than me; and alas! I never was strong; but I am glad about poor old Prosper; as you say, he is not a pleasant person; but to be accused of such a heinous crime! Brrrr!" and he shuddered all over, "that must be fearful. Poor man! we must try and make it up to him somehow."

As the reader will have guessed, the first direction taken by the suspicions of justice was towards Prosper Morel. The man's character, the circumstance of the complaint made against him a week before by the Maire and taken up so vigorously by his employer

that his dismissal had been decided upon by the latter,—all this naturally militated against the woodcutter, and before the day of the murder was ended a mandat d'améner had been made out, and the gendarmes had arrested Prosper. They found him at his work, a good way out in the forest, and his behaviour at once introduced into Monsieur Frédéri's mind certain doubts of his culpability. It was evening when they discovered him, sitting astride upon a newly-felled tree, whose last branches he was leisurely lopping off, whilst he droned out a gloomy Breton cantique to the Holy Virgin. He was just finishing his day's work, and preparing to go home to his hut. When he perceived the gendarmes before him he saluted them civilly, and was about to gather up his tools. They seized him, before explaining to him why; but when the explanation came he was stupefied, not alarmed. The brigadier was an old hand, and had experience in criminals, and he felt instinctively that the bûcheron was not one. The man was stolidly unconscious, and his complete ignorance of what had passed was evident and undeniable. Nevertheless, he was immediately imprisoned, preventively, severely treated, harassed and worried in every possible way, examined and cross-examined, and the palpable proofs of his innocence, which seemed to increase almost hourly, were received with regret by his pursuers—but they were received. Beyond presumption, nothing pointed at Prosper in the details of the crime,—except that it must have been committed by some one who was intimately acquainted with old Prévost's habits, and with the ways of his house.

The mode of the assassination was tolerably clear. The victim must have been standing in front of his safe when the blow was dealt. The blow was dealt from behind, and with extraordinary coolness and certainty and force. Of the three medical men who were called in to visit the corpse, all were of the same opinion,—namely, that the first blow had suspended life, and that when the others were given, they were dealt merely to make assurance doubly sure. There was comparatively little blood, and what there was had flowed downwards upon the floor, after the murdered man had fallen. None had spurted out, and there were no stains on any article of furniture.

Now, as to the time at which the act was committed, that was also easy to determine; it must have been between the hours of six and ten in the morning. Old Prévost was a perfectly wound-up machine as to his habits, and never deviated from the monotonous regularity he had marked out for himself. Summer and winter, he always rose at five. At six he sat down to his bureau, and busied himself with accounts and calculations till eight. At eight he sometimes took a stroll in the garden, or even a short walk out of doors, but as often he remained in his own room. Till ten o'clock began striking, it was not necessary that any one should be acquainted with the whereabouts of Martin Prévost; but when the tenth stroke had struck from

a dusty, wheezy old clock in the passage, instantly the voice of Madame Jean was to be heard calling out in a loud tone, "Monsieur, the breakfast is served."

Now, when, on that fatal Thursday, Madame Jean's voice had sent forth its regular call, nothing stirred. Madame Jean's temper was at once irritated by this piece of unpunctuality, and after three minutes had elapsed she repeated the summons. Still no answer. Madame Jean ascended the stairs, angrily opened the door of her master's room, and saw the sight we have described in our last chapter. Her screams attracted Monsieur Richard, who was in attendance in the dining parlour, awaiting his uncle's presence. The poor young man, whose nervous system was less robust than Madame Jean's, was so overcome by the ghastly scene, that he fainted dead away, and Madame Jean had to raise him as well as she could, and busy herself with recalling him to his senses. Before this was quite accomplished, she had opened a window, called Nicolas up from the stable-door in the yard below where he was attending to the old mare, and despatched him for the Juge de Paix and the Maire, and the doctor, and the all-important brigadier. As to the unhappy Monsieur Richard, between sobbings, and spasms, and swoons, it was long past noon before any rational testimony could be extracted from him.

What was quickly enough realised was this small number of facts;—Martin Prévost had been assassinated after he was dressed, and had begun his daily occupations, consequently, between the hours of seven and ten. He had been struck from behind by a heavy blunt instrument, no trace whereof could be found, and the blow had been dealt with such force that the probability was that the assassin was a man under middle age.

He had been murdered by some one entering the house from without, for the mode of entrance was discovered almost directly. At the end of the passage which divided the house, and ran from the street-door to the yard-door, there was a small room, used for putting away everything in general; and from old boots and dirty linen on the floor, to fresh-made preserves put to set in their pots on the shelves, there was a little of everything in this chambre de débarras. It had one window opening into the yard, and a door opening into the passage. This door was seldom shut, and the window was never open. But a pane of glass had been taken out, through which a man's hand and arm could be introduced, and the window had been opened, for it was left open, and what was more, the iron bar and hasp, rusty, and liable to creak if suddenly turned, were rubbed all over with some filthy grease, found to be borrowed from pots kept by Nicolas in his tool-house for greasing cart-wheels. Through that window, then, the assassin had entered, and passing through the door into the passage, he had mounted the stairs up to Monsieur Prévost's room.

The reason of the crime was at once evident; it lay in the desire to rob. But the safe had not been broken into, as was at first supposed. The safe had been opened, and probably by old Prévost himself.

But then, the ingress of the assassin accounted for, how about his egress? Every fact successively discovered, pointed to the precise moment of the crime as somewhat before seven, for Nicolas had been ordered, the night before, by Martin Prévost himself, to be at the post-office by seven, punctually, to post some business letters, and thus gain several hours by taking advantage of what was called the night post, instead of waiting for the day post, which only went out at three. He had gone out at half-past six, and was found not to have returned much before eight. Madame Jean had gone, as she frequently did, to six o'clock mass, and, as she also frequently did, had passed from the church into the sacristy, and had a bout of conversation with the Vicaire, and she was certain of having returned shortly after half-past seven.

In one hour, then, between half-past six and half-past seven, had the deed been done, for the house was deserted then, and young Monsieur Richard fast asleep, for he slept late at all times, and, especially since his illness, he scarcely ever woke before half-past eight or nine.

But next came the question of escape. How, at that hour, had the murderer escaped? The court-yard, being paved, yielded no trace of a footmark, but in the garden beyond there were some traces of a boot or shoe very different from any that could be matched by the foot of any body in or around the house. These traces were lost at a hedge, then found again in a field beyond, then utterly lost on the banks of the river close to the Cholet high road.

Nothing in all this, as the reader will see, squared the least with the notion of Prosper Morel as the murderer. Still the fact remained of his master having turned him off, and of his having been heard to threaten his master. In this, however, Monsieur Richard was at once his best and worst witness; for, though he could not deny the threat made by Prosper in his presence, yet, aided by Madame Jean, he had been the means of bringing him back into his uncle's service, if not favour; and Madame Jean deposed that Prosper's gratitude to all, and, above all, to his master, for giving him another chance, was loud, deep, and sincere. So said Monsieur le Curé, who had been instructed to admonish Prosper, and who had been, he said, edified by the man's behaviour on that occasion.

Notwithstanding all this, Prosper Morel was kept preventively in prison, and having no other presumable culprit under its claw, French law gave itself its habitual delight in torturing, as much as possible, the one it had caught. However, even French law has a limit to its harshness and narrow-mindedness, and without one single shadow of a proof, Prosper's detention could not last. The man's behaviour in

prison was irreproachable. He was mostly silent, and absorbed in the study of a well-thumbed book of prayers. When not silent, he either sang his Breton cantiques or prayed aloud for the soul of his murdered master. None of his guardians liked him, but there were not two opinions about his innocence. Besides, to his credit be it spoken, Monsieur Richard, so soon as the first shattering effect of the crime had a little worn off, did everything in his power to come to the bûcheron's aid; and when each succeeding examination by the Juge d'Instruction brought forth the increased certainty of the crime having been committed by some one from without, whose identity could not by any means be brought to tally with that of the woodcutter, why, the woodcutter had to be released. So one fine day old Prosper went back to his hut, and recommenced his avocations. But so repellent was the man's nature, that the having been a victim to a false accusation did not make him interesting. His innocence was proved beyond all doubt, yet people shunned him as before, and he led a solitary life up in his woods.

The sum of ready money stolen was found, as nearly as any retrospective calculation could be made, to amount to about fifteen thousand francs—five thousand and odd hundreds in gold and silver, and the rest in notes. The numbers of all the notes had not apparently been taken, although in a little side drawer of Martin Prévost's bureau-table was found, with the date of 8th October written on it, a slip of paper on which were marked down the numbers of three 1,000-franc notes and of two 500-franc ones. Of course the necessary measures were immediately taken to stop these notes, but of the others no trace could be obtained.

Two weeks passed over, and certainly no effort was spared. Officials came from neighbouring towns, and the Préfet of the Chef Lieu du Département wrote to Paris and came himself to D——, and a great stir was made; but the mystery never allowed one corner of its veil to be lifted. There were examples of such mysteries in the judicial history of France, and the Prévost murder was destined to be a fresh one added to the list.

The person who did really create a lively and sincere interest everywhere, was poor Monsieur Richard. For many miles round he was talked of and lamented over; and particularly when it was known how very rich he was, his neighbours fell into the habit of calling him, quite affectionately, "ce pauvre Monsieur Richard."

Of a truth, when old Prévost's affairs came to be looked into, it was a matter for universal surprise to see how rich he had become. He had, for the last twenty or thirty years, conducted his financial business through men who did not know or communicate with each other. But at his death the accounts of all were forthcoming, and the Cholet notary and a Paris notary, a Paris stockbroker and a Paris banker, all produced their books, and old Prévost was found to be

possessed of double and treble the property, in various securities, that had ever been supposed. Between land and floating investments, his fortune amounted to near upon three millions five hundred thousand francs! Bundles of railway obligations there were, for instance, on such lines as the Orleans and St. Germain, which had never been touched since their creation, and which had more than doubled.

Poor Monsieur Richard! It certainly diminished no one's interest in him when the notary at D—— produced Martin Prévost's will, by which, subject only to one or two small charges,—such as a provision for Madame Jean, who did not need it!—he left everything he possessed to his nephew. Richard Prévost's income was not far under one hundred and seventy thousand francs a year!

"Indeed, sir," said the notary at D——, "your poor uncle was more attached to you than any one knows besides myself."

"And even you do not know what I lose in losing him," answered the young man. And his last interview with his uncle seemed to have so deeply impressed him as to have almost cured him of his admiration for Mademoiselle Félicie

CHAPTER VI.

THE LOVERS.

If the reader has not forgotten Monsieur le Vicomte's application to Martin Prévost touching the mortgage or sale of Les Grandes Bruyères, he will readily understand the singular embarrassment in which Monsieur le Vicomte found himself placed when, instead of a living money-lender, he suddenly confronted the corpse of a murdered man. Things had reached a point when any retrograde steps would be likely to provoke a "scandal," as provincial news-hawkers term it; and were Félicie's marriage with Monsieur de Champmorin to be definitively broken off, she might at once resign herself to the blessings of spinsterhood, for she had few or no "extraordinary resources," as Finance Ministers, in the face of a deficit, term it, to fall back upon. Félicie had got just now her one chance in hand. She would hardly get another. How should she? She could not be taken about to watering-places,—there was no money for that sort of thing,—and she could not even achieve a visit to Paris; for, besides the pecuniary question, she had no relation there who would take notice of her unmarried, or help her to get a husband! No; if any unlucky circumstance prevented Mademoiselle Félicie from becoming Madame de Champmorin, she would simply fall back upon her father's hands, or she would have to make a mésalliance, and even of that—frightful as it was!—what likelihood was there in such an out-of-the-way place as D——?

It was altogether a dismal look-out, and such Monsieur le Vicomte felt it to be. Of course a man, even so hard pressed as he was, could

not, for decency's sake, attempt to force on the discussion of his private affairs at the moment of so shocking a catastrophe as that of old Prévost's death. So he was obliged to wait and postpone the settlement with Monsieur de Champmorin's notary, under no matter what pretext. And this was not altogether easy. In France, when a marriage is being negotiated, the two persons who are to be joined together and made one can only, till that junction be operated, be fitly described as "hostile parties." Those who act for them pass their lives in the exercise of the cunningest strategy, and to have "out-manœuvred the enemy" is glorious. True! it is a game of "who wins loses," for if the victory be gained the husband or wife may be lost.

Now, if the Champmorin general attained to a full discovery of what had passed in the Vérancour camp, he would, undoubtedly, raise his own reputation for sharpness and address, and be confided in largely by the fathers and mothers around, but he would cost his client a well-born, strictly brought up, and very charming wife. Vérancour père knew that that consideration was a secondary one, and he did not disguise to himself the danger. Having explained, as well as he could, to his adversary that his own and his father's business had always been managed by Martin Prévost, and that after the latter's retirement from his office he had preferred his advice to that of the notary who was his official successor, Monsieur le Vicomte contrived to obtain a respite from his future son-in-law's representative, and set to work to make the most he could of old Prévost's heir.

There was no kindness, no attention, that was not shown by the inmates of the Château to poor Monsieur Richard; and, though the quality of these advances was still of a patronising sort, yet they were very soothing to the unhappy young man, and he gladly accepted them; so that, by degrees, half his time came to be spent at the Château. He never grew to feel at home with this family, but the intercourse with them was pleasant, and took him out of himself.

With regard to Mademoiselle Félicie, there was assuredly a strange revulsion of feeling in young Prévost's heart and mind. You would have thought that she frightened him, and for the first few days of his intimacy, if such it can be called, at the Château, he almost seemed to shrink from her. Vévette, with her sweet gentle ways, her simple piety, and her instinct of consolation, attracted Richard at the outset far more than the fascinating Félicie, who had, as we know, before the recent tragedy, made such an impression upon him. But this did not last; and the nephew of the deceased usurer and that born Sœur de Charité, Vévette, were, even when taken together, no match for Monsieur de Vérancour's eldest daughter. Before three weeks were past, Monsieur Richard was hopelessly secured, manacled, and cast down enchained at the feet of his fair enslaver, and whilst

he regarded his very adoration,—mute though it was,—as presumptuous, it would have been hard to say whether she condescended even to notice that she had inspired it.

The two sisters were very different; differing in beauty as in character and mind. Félicie was just nineteen, her younger sister seventeen and a half. They were in every respect two nearly perfect types of French womanhood,—of those two great divisions of the female sex in France, neither of which do we Englishmen ever thoroughly understand. The elder girl was a true representative of the by far larger class, which, from Diane de Poitiers down to Madame Tallien or to Madame Récamier, through all the Chevreuses, Montespans, and Pompadours of three centuries, has borne haughtily in hand the banner of feminine courage, activity, and intelligence, and gone unloving through history. The younger one personified that infinitely rarer order of women, humble and heroic at once, who from Jeanne d'Arc to Louise de la Vallière, worship the ideal, and accept martyrdom as a fitting punishment for having loved.

There is the one characteristic common to the two classes;—both believe love to be an evil, a thing unholy, and in the negation whereof lies true sanctity. Only, whilst the one side achieves the triumph easily, and puts heart and soul into ambition and intellectual pursuits, the other side yields to the conqueror, and accepts wretchedness and death as the fitting penance for having loved. Much of all this is owing to the social constitution of France, somewhat more to the influence of the clergy and their curious interpretation of Catholic doctrines, but most of all to the conventual and physically ascetic education of well-born women. But for the pivot round which all social relations revolve in France, and on which depend all her immoralities, and a vast deal of her intellectual greatness, you need look no further than to the condemnation of love, held to as a principle by all Frenchwomen,—by those who act up to, as well as by those who are faithless to it.

Félicie de Vérancour was the very incarnation of what is called a superior woman in France. She had latent in her all that might make one of the most famous of her kind. Self-possessed she was, proud, firm, and a slave to what she believed was duty, Such women are, in France, extolled as high-principled because they are exempt from all passion. Their worst feature is, that they do nothing save upon calculation; their best, that they really are superior to every circumstance. It is not in the power of poverty or misfortune, or even of death itself, to humble, or shake, or extinguish the spirit of a lady in France. This it is which wins for them, often wrongfully, their fame for devotedness. Nine-tenths are devoted to their high idea of themselves,—which may stand instead of a virtue. The tenth portion is devotion itself; but the motive for the devotion is to be found in the idea of expiation. They have loved! Therefore they must expiate.

Félicie was the perfection of the modern beauty of France;—small, delicate, graceful, refined; every movement, every look, was feline; and, once in her atmosphere, you were magnetised. She occupied and attracted you incessantly, raised all your curiosity, and never for one instant satisfied it.

As to Vévette—; but she is too well known to be portrayed. All nations and all ages know her. Italy calls her Juliet, Germany Gretchen; we in England cannot name her, for she is legion; in France only is she rare, for she is out of the social groove, and lives, however innocent or pure she may happen to be, in a perpetual state of terror and humiliation at the notion of her sin.

Well! October was drawing to its close, and there seeming to be no chance of the gloomy mystery being fathomed, the Prévost murder had ceased to be the sole preoccupation of the public mind at D——.

The weather was magnificent for the season, and, in exchange for Monsieur de Vérancour's attention to him, Richard Prévost gave the Vicomte permission to shoot over every acre of his land, of which permission the Vicomte profited to the utmost extent. Félicie's dominion over the poor young man had reached such a height that he had ceased having any over himself. He belonged to Félicie. And yet, if you had studied him well, you must have come to the conclusion that Monsieur Richard was not "in love."

One evening, towards the end of the month, Vévette was descending the little, narrow, stony path, leading from the parish church of D—— to a side entrance into the gardens of the Château. She had a prayer-book in her hand.

As she turned a corner of the old wall, and thus was completely hidden from the side of the town, some one came from behind the bushes which skirted the path towards the open country, and a voice said, almost in a whisper, "Vévette!"

The girl stopped, and turning pale, "Oh! how you frightened me, Raoul!" she said, clasping her prayer-book close upon her breast with both hands.

"Frightened you, Vévette!" was the rejoinder, in a tone of more sadness than reproach. "Alarm is not the feeling I wish to inspire, but I must speak to you, dearest; I must indeed."

Vévette trembled, and looked thoroughly scared. "At this hour," she objected, "and so near the house. It is too dangerous! Suppose any one should see us. Good heavens, Raoul, how did you come? why did you come here?"

"Vévette, dearest!" was the answer, in a gentle tone, "I came here on foot from Mollignon, across the fields, and I came here because I tell you again that I must see you. I calculated that, as this was Saturday, you would certainly be going to confession at your usual hour, and that as you came home I could meet you;

but you are coming back an hour earlier than usual,—has anything happened?"

"Yes," replied she; "Monsieur le Curé has been sent for to administer poor old Gayrard, the blacksmith, who is dying, and he can only be in the confessional this evening."

The young man came close to the trembling girl, and took one of her hands in his, which apparently increased her alarm tenfold. "Vévette," pleaded he, tenderly, "we have a whole hour to ourselves. You will not be expected home before six, and it has not yet struck five. Now listen to me, darling;" and he drew closer to her side; "there may be a certain danger in talking here, as we are now doing; it is not likely that any one will pass this way, which leads only from your gate to the church,—still it is within possibility; there will be no danger at all if you will come down as far as the Pavilion, and let me go in there with you."

The girl shuddered. "Into the Pavilion, Raoul?" she exclaimed. "Why what would become of us, if——;" she hesitated. "What would happen supposing my father——"

"Where is your father?" interrupted Raoul.

"Out shooting in the woods belonging to La Grande Ferme."

"Oh! his new friend, Monsieur Richard's woods," observed he with a smile. "And Félicie?"

"Félicie is at home, hard at work at the altar carpet we are to give Monsieur le Curé at All Saints'."

"And, rely upon it, Monsieur Richard is in attendance upon her," added the young man, with an expression of bitter disdain. "I should not be permitted to be alone with either of you for two minutes; but that bourgeois-millionnaire may pay his court at all hours."

"For shame, Raoul," retorted Vévette. "He has gone through such an awful trial; and besides, poor Monsieur Richard, he is of no consequence!"

During this little parley, Raoul had managed to obtain undisputed possession of Vévette's hand, and in the end he also persuaded her to come with him into what he called the Pavilion.

This was no other than a kind of garden-house built into the wall of the old rampart. It lay immediately under the terrace on which, some days since, we saw the two sisters sitting at work, and was entered by a glass door, which opened upon a narrow path of the kitchen-garden. A small gate in the wall gave ingress from the lane into the garden, and of this gate Vévette kept the key; for it was through it she let herself out and in, when she went to the church or the presbytère. The only occasions on which Vévette or her sister ever moved about alone were these. The church and presbytère had originally been dependencies of the Château, and the small number of servants in the Verancour household made it convenient that some-

times the young ladies should venture unattended from their own garden-gate to the sacristy-door.

In the interior of the Pavilion there were two rooms; one rather large, the other a mere dark closet, at the back, without a window.

When the pair had entered and closed the glass door, the young man threw off his hat, and raising Vévette's hand to his lips, kissed it silently, and with a sort of grave rapture. She laid her prayer-book down.

What a handsome pair they were. She all grace, and softness, and tenderness, and humility; and he all fire and energy, and made, as it seemed, to protect her. Vévette was the first to speak. He appeared to have forgotten why they were there.

"Raoul," said she, "why have you forced me to come here? What have you to say to me?"

Holding her hand, which he took from his lips, in one of his, he, with the other arm, encircled her waist, and pressed her to him fondly. Her head just reached his chin, and as he bent down towards her, he could not choose but kiss her beautiful fair hair; but he did so reverently.

"Don't tremble so, my own," murmured he, almost inaudibly,—for she quivered like a leaf. "You do not, you cannot fear me," and he drew her still closer to him.

Vévette was all pallor, and then again all one blush, and panting with terror and emotion. "What will become of us!" she cried; and with a sudden, childlike impulse, she hid her face upon her lover's shoulder, and burst into tears.

Gently as a mother stills her babe did Raoul strive to calm and pacify Vévette. "My very own," said he, when the first paroxysm was over, "if you will follow my counsels, and if you can rely upon yourself, all will come right. Only answer me two questions, Do you love me, Vévette?" and as he uttered the words, he looked at her with his whole soul in his eyes. She gave no reply in words, but as her eyes sank before his, she again hid her face on his breast, and a tremor, a kind of electric vibration, passed over her frame.

"Well, then," resumed Raoul, apparently satisfied, "will you consent to be bargained away to some man you cannot love, as your sister will be? Will you betray and destroy me, out of weakness?"

Vévette turned round and looked imploringly at her lover. "What am I to do, Raoul?" she pleaded. "Obedience to my father is my most sacred, my first duty."

"No, Vévette, it is not so," interrupted Raoul firmly. "Truth to me is now your first duty. You have given me your heart and soul, and you must be true to me, or be unworthy."

"Oh! Raoul, Raoul!" wept the agonised girl, "there is my sin; and for that sin we shall both suffer."

"Vévette, there is your virtue, and virtue is strength. Our love can save us, but it must be strong. We are going to be separated,"—this was uttered with a visible effort. "Don't be alarmed, my sweet one; there is no separation between those who really love. We shall be nearer to each other when I am in Paris and you here, than you and any of those who are side by side with you will be. I am not afraid of the trial, Vévette, and therefore you need not be so. My father sends me to Paris to enter the offices of the Ministère de la Marine as an unpaid clerk,—the interest of my uncle the Admiral has achieved this enviable position,—but that is merely the beginning. I have another plan. I will make my own career for myself."

"Raoul!" interrupted Vévette, aghast at her lover's boldness. "And your father!"

"My father will in the end approve, because he will be unable to help himself, for I will distinguish myself and bring fresh honour to his name. But that is all a matter of mere detail, and we have not time for it now; the one thing of importance to us is, to be sure of each other. We are very soon to be parted, darling. Will you wait for me, and will you one day be my wife?"

Vévette's look of mute despair told the entire tale of her mistaken education.

"Will you promise me," continued Raoul, compassionately, "to withstand all attempts to marry you to any one else."

"Raoul!" exclaimed she with energy, and as though illuminated by a sudden inspiration, "I will promise you to take the veil rather than marry any one else. That I can do, and that I will do."

"Poor child!" rejoined her lover gravely; "and so work out the misery and death of both yourself and me. And this is what they call religious teaching! Now listen to me, Vévette," and he put both his arms round her.

"Hush!" whispered she, breaking from him hurriedly; "there is some one coming down the path this way; we are lost!"

"Be calm, Vévette," said Raoul, with authority; "I will hide myself there in the dark closet. Open the door directly; meet whoever it is with assurance, and try to draw them away from the Pavilion!"

Vévette obeyed mechanically; took up her garden hat, opened the glass door, and found herself face to face with Richard Prévost.

"Good evening, Mademoiselle Geneviève," said he respectfully. "You are just returned from church, I see. I was going out this way, up the steep path, because I have some one to see on the Place de l'Eglise, and it is much nearer;" and he went towards the gate in the wall.

Raoul had the key in his pocket. He had shut it and locked it on the inside. What was to be done? Vévette's confusion was luckily somewhat concealed by her large, overhanging straw hat, and Monsieur Richard was never supposed to be very sharp. She stammered something about the key being lost, and in fact said at last that she had

lost it, and was afraid she should be scolded. "It is no matter at all," replied blandly Monsieur Richard, "we can go round. But I thought you always went that way. I thought you came just now from that gate into the Pavilion."

"I had come all the way round, but had some seeds I wanted to look for in the garden-house," she answered, trembling with fear.

"Oh! I beg your pardon a thousand times," said Monsieur Richard humbly. "I am afraid I have disturbed you."

They went back together towards the Château, and Vévette let Monsieur Richard out by another gate, and then went into the house herself, calm externally, but internally convulsed with dread.

Had Monsieur Richard seen anything, or heard voices? What did he guess? What did he know?

That evening the sisters went together to the church, and close behind the sacristy-door Vévette perceived Raoul. When they went out, Vévette followed Félicie. "All is safe," whispered a voice in her ear as she passed, and a key was put into her hand under her cloak. Félicie had seen nothing.

CHAPTER VII.

THE VICOMTE'S TROUBLES.

It was within two days of All-Saints' day, when Monsieur le Vicomte went up just after breakfast-time to pay a visit to his new friend and protégé, as he thought him.

Madame Jean received him with affability. She had grown gracious in her demeanour towards the "Son of the Crusaders;" for, in the first place, the tragical death of her old master had considerably softened her, and in the next she relented towards these ci-devants, —useless and obstructive as they seemed to her,—because their conduct to her young master touched her.

She shook her head, with a sigh, in answer to Monsieur de Vérancour's inquiries at the door. "Ah!" said she, "we are none of us the same since then. We shall be a long while before we get over it; and as for poor Monsieur Richard, he really ought to be persuaded to go away for a short time. He never was strong, but he is wasting away now. He ought to change the air. He wants change of scene, change of everything. He's in a bad way." And with another mournful shake of the head, she ushered the Vicomte into Monsieur Richard's presence.

It was not the room that had formerly been old Prévost's, nor even that immediately under it, which his nephew had been used to inhabit. It was the salon de compagnie, as provincials term it, which Monsieur Richard had caused to be arranged as a kind of study, and out of which he rarely went.

When the Vicomte entered, Richard Prévost came forward, eagerly, to meet him, and when they were seated he began the conversation. "Has the shooting been satisfactory?" he asked. "I have done my best, and have told the garde at the Grande Ferme to keep a sharp look-out; but it is hard in these parts not to share one's game with all the ne'er-do-wells of the department."

"Well, yesterday I tried the woods up there," rejoined Monsieur de Vérancour, pointing in the direction of the hill behind the town. "In the way of hares and chevreuils there's something to be done certainly."

"Ah!" remarked Richard; "in the high timber? yes; and if I dared put old Prosper Morel at your orders, you might have excellent sport. Never was there such a traqueur as that man in the world. But then, you see, I daren't trust him with a gun;—you know he was complained of in my uncle's time;—the instinct is too strong for him. We were obliged even to have his permit taken from him. I daren't give you Prosper."

"Well," answered the Vicomte, in a musing manner, "I saw the poor old fellow yesterday up in the woods yonder, and he looks to me terribly altered. I can't help thinking those few days' imprisonment, and the examinations and suspicions, and all together, were too much for him. He stares at you in such a strange way, and is more absent than ever. He has quite a moon-struck air."

"Poor man, poor man!" exclaimed Monsieur Richard. "I do not know how to compensate to him for all he went through. In my poor uncle's time he used to be down here every two days, at least; now he scarcely comes at all. Poor old Prosper!"

The conversation dropped, and it was evident that Monsieur le Vicomte had not paid Richard Prévost this matutinal visit merely to converse about the wrongs of the Breton woodcutter. After a pause of a few seconds, he began upon the matter which was occupying all his mind. "You have perhaps not yet had time to look for the acts I hinted at the other day," said he, in the most propitiatory tone he could assume.

Richard Prévost looked as though he had dropped from the clouds. The Vicomte grew more insinuating still.

"I mean the deeds of transfer your lamented uncle had been so good as to prepare," added he, with a smile wherein the deepest sympathy was meant to be allied to the most gracious condescension. "Alas! the papers were all to have been signed on the very day on which——" And here Monsieur de Vérancour cut his narration short with an appropriate shudder.

"I remember now," replied Richard. "You allude to the papers concerning the sale of Les Grandes Bruyères." The Vicomte nodded assent. "I must beg for forgiveness; but I have only once had the courage to go up there again,—into that dreadful room. I have only once looked into my poor uncle's papers, and I found nothing there."

"Yes! in truth it must be dreadful;—dreadful!" rejoined Monsieur le Vicomte, whose self-interest was waxing warm, and who hardly knew how to come to his point. "Dreadful! shattering to the nervous system; but we must be men,—my poor Monsieur Richard! —we must be men!"

Monsieur Richard sighed. "My poor dear uncle had agreed, I think you told me, to purchase Les Grandes Bruyères," he began, with an apparent effort.

"For the sum of seventy thousand francs paid down," replied Monsieur de Vérancour. "They were to have been paid into my hands on the fourteenth of this month,—on the day of the murder."

Monsieur Richard turned pale, and for a moment closed his eyes. Then, languidly, he drawled out the poor excuse which he had to offer. "It must seem deplorably weak to you," he said, "but to enter that room turns me sick. I have tried, and I am not equal to it. You see I have even left what had been my own room since I was a boy. I instinctively fly from all that recalls the horrible, horrible event!" Another pause. "My poor uncle, then, had almost bought the property," he added, half speaking to himself.

"Almost!" echoed Monsieur de Vérancour. "Quite! He had quite bought it. The formal engagement was taken. It was binding——"

"Not in law," interrupted Richard meekly.

"Perhaps not; but in honour," retorted Vérancour, becoming desperate.

"Let us say in friendship," suggested Monsieur Richard. "Can you,—will you confide in me as in my poor uncle, and let me know why the immediate sale of the property was so desirable?"

The Vicomte hesitated, and probably the "inward man" made a wry face; but the outward one had to make the best of it, for what else was there to do? So he told him all.

Monsieur Richard listened with the deepest, most respectful, attention to the story of which it apparently suited him to appear ignorant; and when the tale was ended, he rubbed his forehead repeatedly with his hand, and seemed a prey to some hopeless perplexity.

"So that if the property is not purchased within a given time," he began, "there might result a positive inconvenience,—a kind of obstacle,—to the establishment of Mademoiselle Félicie."

"A kind of obstacle!" echoed the Vicomte; "why, it would be ruin, my dear Monsieur,—ruin to us all; for such a parti as Monsieur de Champmorin is not to be found readily in the provinces."

Monsieur de Vérancour, like a great many people in his position, became pressing the moment he had ceased to be supercilious and disdainful, and he was on the verge of becoming importunate. Now that he had been forced into confiding in Monsieur Richard, it did seem to him so tremendous a fact that a daughter of the house of Vérancour should be placed in a dilemma out of which this low-born,

money-lending bourgeois could extricate her, that he thought by the mere statement of the case to overwhelm that individual and secure his services to an unlimited extent.

When the Vicomte made the hurried and vehement admission of his embarrassment, a flush stole over Monsieur Richard's cheek, and a light shot from beneath his eyelids; but he concealed both by his hand on which he leant.

"I could hardly have believed," he said, slowly, and with an expression of sorrow, "that any event, coming immediately after the dreadful catastrophe which has so shaken me, could give me such intense pain; but indeed, Monsieur le Vicomte, your statement makes me miserable beyond words. Do you require me to say that my devotion to your family is without bounds? Obscure as I am, I may be allowed to express my gratitude. Your kindness to me since my misfortune has made me your slave. I would give my life to serve any of you." The Vicomte looked benignly upon his inferior, and seemed to accept his sacrifice with indulgence. "But," continued Richard Prévost, "it is out of my power to do anything."

"How out of your power?" retorted the Vicomte, forgetful of everything save his own needs. "Surely you can keep your uncle's engagement?"

"Perhaps at some later date," replied Monsieur Richard, "It would pain me too much to say no!—perhaps later;—perhaps when I see clear in my own affairs. You see times are bad just now;—the financial crisis lasts still, and I cannot sell. All the ready money has been carried away, as you know, by the robbery; and I am myself in difficulties, for I am concluding the arrangements for the purchase of the Chateaubréville estate; and,—to you I will avow it,—I do not know how to obtain what is wanted for the first payment, because, as I said before, all securities are so depreciated, that if I sell, I must be a heavy loser. However, later;—in a month or two——"

"Good God!" exclaimed the Vicomte, rudely, "in a month or two all will be over! Unless I can get the money within a fortnight Champmorin will be off! His notary is a sharp fellow, and will soon find out how the land really lies. And once this chance gone, where is Félicie to find a husband? I wish you would tell me!"

"Oh! Monsieur le Vicomte!" answered Richard, bowing low, "it is not for such as me to point out that;—but assuredly so accomplished a young lady, so admirable a person as Mademoiselle Félicie, and of so illustrious a race, can only have to choose."

"Bah!" retorted Monsieur de Vérancour; "no perfections are worth a centime! And in the pit of ignominy into which we have sunk, gold only is powerful. The noblesse deserts itself, the historical names sell themselves to the highest bidders, and take the mothers of their future sons from the gutter, so there be money to be got! I tell

you Félicie has no chance. She must live to be a beggarly old maid, if she can't marry Champmorin!" And then Monsieur le Vicomte fell to wheedling his opponent, and called him his "dear Monsieur Richard," and expressed his conviction that he would help him out of his difficulties in consideration of the friendship they bore him.

When Monsieur de Vérancour took leave of Richard Prévost the latter had promised to try and borrow the seventy thousand francs, but he laid stress on the word "try," for he said the operation would be difficult.

The Vicomte was no sooner gone than Monsieur Richard opened a drawer in the table near which he was sitting, and drew out a large leather portfolio full of papers. After turning over several of them, he stopped at one; and looked at it a long while. It was the deed of sale of Les Grandes Bruyères, drawn up by old Martin Prévost.

Monsieur Richard spelt and weighed every word, and then at last took it up and examined it closely. In so doing, another sheet of paper adhered to it, and from between the folds a half-open letter dropped upon the ground. When Richard Prévost had sufficiently examined the deed, he replaced it in the portfolio, then stooped, picked up the fallen letter, and was about to replace it too; but something in it arrested his attention, and he opened and read it; it was as follows:—

"My Dear Monsieur Prévost,

"I dare not go to you, for fear my father should hear of it and have some suspicion, and my father must not know of what I am about to ask. You once told me, when I was only a boy, that if ever I needed help I must apply to you. I do so now. I am in absolute need of the sum of two thousand francs. I have no means of getting it,—and if I do not get it, I no longer care for life! My future, my happiness, everything hangs upon this, to you, so trifling a sum, and a week hence will be too late! Do not let me ask in vain. I have believed in your words, I have relied upon you, I have no other resource. For the sake of the gratitude they say your mother once owed to mine, help me now.

"Yours devotedly,

"Raoul de Morville."

Richard grew pale and red alternately, as he read and re-read this letter, and when he saw the date, the 7th of October, he muttered to himself, "Just a week before the day! Oh! my God, my God! what is this!" and crumpling the letter up in one of his hands, he sank back upon his chair, and leaned his head upon the table before him.

THE NEW ELECTORS;

OR,

PROBABLE EFFECTS OF THE REFORM BILL ON THE STRENGTH OF PARTIES.

BEFORE this paper is in the hands of our readers, the Edinburgh banquet will have afforded Mr. Disraeli an excellent opportunity for a fresh exposition of the results which he expects from his memorable achievements in respect of Reform. Mr. Disraeli is seldom seen to greater advantage than when he fills the post of the honoured guest at a grand political entertainment. Stately in language, fully prepared for the necessary amount of colouring and exaggeration, ready with epigrams of the most trenchant style, yet withal allowing a flavour of gay, but not inappropriate, persiflage to pervade his most serious passages, he allows his audience on such occasions a much better insight into his mind, and into his mode of viewing things and men, than when he speaks as the inscrutable leader of the House of Commons. And lately his extra-parliamentary utterances have possessed an additional attraction. Within the walls of the House of Commons, Mr. Disraeli deemed it necessary, throughout last session, to drop the character of a party-man. He assumed an attitude studiously neutral, constantly impressing on the House the absolute duty and necessity of settling Reform without respect to party considerations, and he only burst forth into his old style of fierce invective when any movement on the part of the liberal leaders appeared to infringe the rule that all party warfare was to cease for the nonce. But still the Tories had to be reassured,—especially those out of doors, who, free from the discipline which kept the parliamentary party together, wanted to know how household suffrage was to be reconciled with Tory principles. And so, out of the House, Mr. Disraeli indemnified his friends for his reticence within. His party speeches out of doors gave the cue which his puzzled followers so urgently wanted, as to the line to be taken in explaining to Tory constituencies the scope of the Bill. Toryism, they were told, might henceforth rely for the defence of our existing institutions on the conservative instincts of borough householders below the seven-pound line! As far as we can judge from outward appearances, the theory has been accepted by those to whom it was addressed, if not as a profound conviction, yet as an article of faith. But a commentary is still sadly wanting to enable conservative

orators to expatiate upon the text. The speeches made at agricultural gatherings have thus far thrown but little light upon this abstruse proposition; and it would be indeed disappointing if the banquet at Edinburgh should be allowed to pass by without the real nature and actual scope of the Conservatism of the masses having been fully explained by the eminent political explorer who discovered the fact of its existence.

What the country, above all things, desires to know is, the view which will be taken by the majority of the new electors, not of forms of government, laws, &c., which no one thinks of repealing or attacking, but of institutions and arrangements which have been subjected to, or are likely to be subjected to, actual attack, and which are professedly repugnant to different sections of the liberal or Radical party. It is of little practical account to assert vaguely that the new electors will be attached to the throne and to the existing forms of government. No unprejudiced person doubts the loyalty to the throne of all classes of the community. Isolated workshops may, for aught we know, have republican sympathies, and a few fanatics, without any influence, may possibly, here and there, indulge in violent nonsense. But to talk of loyalty to the throne as distinguishing one class more than another is either mere pompous bombast or insincere innuendo. As to the House of Lords, it may be true that the bulk of the poorer population may feel greater traditional reverence for this branch of the legislature than skilled artisans; and we are not sure that if the conventional phrases of attachment to our existing institutions, and so forth, as used at conservative banquets, were translated into every-day language, and stripped of their rhetorical accessories, they would not be found simply to mean that householders below the seven-pound line have more confidence in the aristocracy, and will be inclined to leave more power in their hands, than might be the case with the flower of the working classes. If we further grant that such a bias in favour of lords must necessarily redound to the advantage of Tories, it may perhaps be correct to say that the Conservatives will have a start with a large mass of the new electors, which they would not have had with the more limited number of skilled artisans. But will they have more than a start, and is this vague feeling of respect for aristocratical influence, if it really exists, equivalent to conservative instincts? Above all, will the new electors look more to forms of government, or to laws which are the results of those forms? To the machinery by which measures are produced, or to the measures themselves? Can there be a doubt that whatever the sentiments may be with which they regard the House of Lords, or any other part of our Constitution, they will be influenced in their choice of representatives much more by the course which these representatives are likely to take as to practical laws affecting the well-being or touching the prejudices of those

who elect them, than by views as to abstract questions which are not at all likely to assume a practical form. The Conservatives possibly rely on being able to raise an alarm that our present forms of government are in danger, or at all events that they are safer while Tories are in power and command a majority, than if Liberals were at the helm. But even if we assume that the Conservatives might succeed in persuading a portion of the new electors that this was the case, can they hope to command ascendancy by promising to defend the Constitution which nobody attacks, if, on scores of questions deeply affecting the sentiments, the prejudices, and interests of the working classes, they find themselves unable to sympathise with the popular demands? For our own part, if we look to the political and social questions which are likely to arise, and to the part which, as far as opportunities for forming an opinion have been given, the poorer classes have taken with regard to them while unenfranchised, we confess we are at a loss to discover in what material respect the power of the Tory party, in the sense which Tories have hitherto assigned to their own name, is to be increased by Lord Derby's Reform Bill.

If we wish to discover the subjects which are likely to interest and occupy the future electors and their representatives, we must not confine ourselves to the review of those matters which have hitherto been thought to constitute the orthodox list of party questions. In a previous paper we drew attention to work which still remains to be done, of the old kind, in the direction of "civil and religious liberty;" but we intimated our belief that the new Parliament would draw up a fresh programme of questions which, by common consent, would form the basis for future party conflicts. Many matters which have hitherto been considered as open questions, not only in cabinets, but by the rank and file of both parties, will assume an importance in the eyes of the new constituencies which will entitle them to rank amongst the foremost articles of faith in the political creed. We cannot doubt that the creeds of all political parties will be subjected to a general revision, and it is not difficult to prognosticate what subjects the more advanced school of Radicals are likely to insist upon bringing to the front. Under these circumstances, the real question which every Tory who has laid up in his heart Mr. Disraeli's dictum as to the Conservatism of the masses must ask himself is evidently this;—what will be the views of these new electors, not upon abstract questions, which are not likely to be mooted by any influential section of politicians, but upon those matters with which it is absolutely certain that the reformed Parliament will be called upon to deal, and probably without delay?

The anxious Conservative will run over in his mind some of those existing arrangements which he has been accustomed to see attacked by Radical forces, and he will wonder what evidence there is to prove

that the new electors will, in such cases, be on his side. Among other matters he will remember that his party fought a stoutly-contested battle in defence of the system of flogging in the army. "The system," he would say, "is one of our institutions, and Mr. Disraeli has declared that our institutions, which are but 'the embodiments of our national necessities,' will be safe under the guardianship of his new allies. But are householders below the seven-pound line really likely to look upon flogging as a national necessity? Surely on this point it is scarcely safe to count on their support. They are certain to go with the Radicals. It will be better to forestal the attack at once, and in defiance of the strong military element on the conservative benches, to expunge this article of faith from the conservative creed." In sober earnest, military questions will probably be treated very differently by Liberals and Conservatives respectively under the new régime. We willingly believe that the new electors may really be found to possess that greater sensitiveness on the point of national honour, and that readier disposition to have recourse to arms, which we have often been told to expect from the working classes. In the present aspect of affairs abroad, when the worship of force and the prestige of victorious aggression have once more somewhat rudely disturbed the rising hopes of those who predicted that wars were shortly to become anachronisms, we are inclined to believe that no harm will be done by a little accession of vigour to our national sentiments. The caution of the middle classes will be amply strong enough to balance any pugnacity which the new electors may display. But even if the assumption is correct that the working classes may shrink less from war than the representatives of middle-class Liberalism, it by no means follows that they will in any way sympathise with what we may be permitted to call, without offence, the more professional military spirit which is so often somewhat ostentatiously exhibited on the conservative benches of the House of Commons. We do not wish to imply that zealous military reformers may not be found on both sides of the Speaker's chair in the House of Commons, or, on the other hand, that there are not liberal politicians who are very conservative soldiers. But the tone of the two political parties with regard to army matters is eminently distinct, and whether it be the abolition of corporal punishment, or the modification of the purchase system, or the reduction of the expenses imposed upon officers, or any other army reform on which Liberals feel strongly, we can scarcely conceive that any man in his senses can entertain doubts as to the side towards which the representatives of working-class electors, whether they live in ten-pound or in four-pound houses, are likely to incline.

Is there any better hope for the Conservatives of the old school as regards another question on which they have strong hereditary prejudices? Are the game laws one of those institutions which, "being

the embodiment of national necessities," are likely to secure the loyalty of the newly-enfranchised class? The country gentlemen who follow Mr. Disraeli have better opportunities than we have for judging of the probable accession of strength to the cause of the game-laws by the enfranchisement of the poorest class of borough householders. We admit that in our view the subject, though serious, is not one of vital importance; but, like the question of flogging in the army which we touched just now, it is to a certain extent typical. If we know how a man will vote on the game laws, we can make a shrewd guess as to his probable votes on many other matters. The irrepressible ardour which the bulk of the Tory party invariably displays when it is summoned to the defence of the privileges of landowners with regard to game, and, on the other hand, the keenness with which a portion of the Liberals watch magisterial decisions on the subject of poaching affrays, are no doubt, to a certain extent, attributable to the party character which the question has assumed; and the one side is further animated with a real apprehension that changes in the law might interfere with one of the healthiest and manliest of English amusements which the country affords, while the other side entertains a legitimate jealousy of county magistrates being often, in these cases, to all intents and purposes judges and prosecutors at the same time. But, if we are not mistaken, both parties feel that, besides these issues, there are other matters involved. Changes in the game laws might tamper with vested rights, and with customs that have acquired the force of principles. We believe that our readers will easily feel what we mean, when we repeat that votes on the game laws are not bad indications of the tone of a man's mind; and we doubt if the Tories are justified in hoping for an accession of strength, in this respect, even from the new electors in agricultural boroughs least contaminated by the dreaded urban element.

We might go further, and express our doubts whether, if in other matters besides the game laws the jurisdiction of justices of the peace should be subjected to revision, and attempts should be made more and more to substitute the stipendiary system for the paternal and neighbourly authority of county magistrates, the new electors would be found to exert their power to defend existing arrangements. We are not speaking of the wisdom or expediency of this or of any other change to which we have occasion to refer. On many matters we should doubtless find most material differences of opinion between the new electors and ourselves. We are not presuming to point out how they ought to act, or to which side we would wish to see their influence given. What we desire to do is to show that no estimate of the principles and feelings which may probably prevail under the new order of things can be really useful if it is confined to vague generalities about the loyal Conservatism or the democratic Radicalism of the new class of voters. Such an estimate is sure to

mislead, unless it extends to specific measures, and deals with the opinions which are likely to be held on existing institutions, or on such questions which we already see rising before us. If the "conservative instincts" of the poorest class of voters in boroughs are a reality, and not a mere phrase, it is clearly most interesting for all parties to ascertain on what group of practical questions,—social, religious, or political,—this tendency is likely to be displayed.

It might be vaguely said that they will probably range themselves on the side of "authority." A crucial test is easily found. Will the Government appeal to its action on the Parks Bill as specially entitling it to the confidence of the working men,—not of those skilled and intelligent artisans whom Mr. Disraeli confesses to be so hopelessly liberal that their admission to the franchise without the class below them would have assured permanent ascendancy to his political rivals,—but even of that lower class whom Lord Derby has avowedly enfranchised for the purpose of "dishing the Whigs" and strengthening Tory influence? On no subject raised during the late session, except perhaps on the Trades' Union Commission, did the Conservatives appear to feel more strongly. The Parks Bill fell in legitimately and naturally with conservative views; yet, even if it had been more wisely framed and more opportunely introduced than was the case this year, we scarcely think that its prospects would have been much improved by an appeal from the existing constituencies to the alleged conservative stratum below the ten-pound line.

It should be observed that none of the subjects with which we have dealt hitherto can properly be called "class" questions. They are not cases in which the interests of the richer or poorer classes, or of the urban or rural elements, clash. Conservative farmers have far more actual annoyance from the game laws than Radical artisans. Our armies are mainly recruited from the agricultural districts; yet it is at metropolitan hustings that the practice of flogging soldiers is most loudly denounced. And Heaven forbid that the Parks Bill should be treated from a class point of view! The Conservatives, we will assume, pressed it in the interest of "authority" and of the people themselves; and the people treated it as a question of popular privilege, not as against the rich, but as against the Crown, or the police. But if, on many questions where the interests and prejudices of their own class are not at all involved, we find the new electors likely to be diametrically opposed to the conservative mode of thought, what can we expect in the case of those subjects where each class may legitimately hold a view of its own,—questions in this country, let us hope, not likely to bring classes into collision, but requiring to be settled by a system of "give and take," moderating the decision of the majority? If it be admitted that such questions exist,—and who can deny it?—every one must be prepared to find that with regard to them the new electors will act precisely in the same manner

as the members of other classes;—they will make the best fight they can for themselves; and sincere reformers, who believe that under the Constitution, such as it has been, the working class had not sufficient power to make its wants and wishes felt, will rejoice that in this respect the admission of so large a number of new voters is likely to effect a sensible improvement. The interests need not be conflicting, though they may be different. For instance, we believe that it is quite possible to legislate on trades' unions in a manner which shall neither hurt the employer nor the workman. But where the interests actually clash, or are supposed by both parties, or by either party, to clash, it is clear that the new electors will study their own interests as sturdily as landowners, or capitalists, or tradesmen study theirs. Has Mr. Disraeli built on this foundation? It would indeed be a piece of Machiavelian strategy,—not entirely foreign to his policy,—to have enfranchised the poorest classes in boroughs, precisely on account of their interests being, in his opinion, more widely separated from those of their employers than from those of landed proprietors. For what would be more natural than that they should ally themselves with the landed interest in the hope of neutralising the influence in legislation exercised by that middle class to which the employers of labour generally belong.

The little desire shown by the Conservatives to enfranchise the poorer class of agricultural householders in counties gives some colour to such an idea. Greater confidence was shown by the leaders of the county-interest party in the "residuum" of towns than in the residuum with which they have to deal at home. They preferred to enfranchise classes employed by others rather than those whom they employed themselves; as if they regarded the former as possible allies, and the latter as possible foes. Indeed, sometimes during the late session it was scarcely possible to resist the idea that Mr. Disraeli might have won over his followers to household suffrage by some such confidential argument as this;—"Give me carte-blanche as to the franchise in boroughs, and I will undertake that you shall be the winners by Reform. Practically the boroughs are lost to us now. They belong to the Liberals, as the counties belong to us. Let us try a bold course, and attempt a radical change of the borough franchise; for we can't be worse off there than we are now, and therefore, if there is a change, it must be a change for the better. The Liberals clamour for representation of the working classes. Let us give it them,—taking it entirely out of their share of power, and keeping all that we ourselves have got. The worst that can happen is, that the boroughs remain as much lost to us as they are now, while the chances are that the many disputes which arise between the trading middle class and the workmen whom they employ may drive the latter into our arms. Thus we shall have the credit of the Reform Bill, yet our concessions will be made entirely at the expense of our political foes.

And consider the further advantage. Many of the Liberals will be so frightened at what I shall compel them to do, and what they will scarcely have the face to oppose, that they will actually come to our assistance in strengthening the county influence afterwards. They will consent to a re-arrangement of boundaries, to a large elimination of the urban element for rural constituencies, and a liberal increase of county members. Only let me carry an extension suffrage in the boroughs, where our party is nowhere, and I will secure a great accession of influence for the counties, where we rule supreme. Depend upon it, the Radicals will be so taken by the notion of household suffrage, that they will suffer no one to baffle me in my plans as to counties and boundaries, and sundry other devices, which, together with the chances of playing off the working classes in towns against their employers, will secure to the Tory party a long period of undoubted ascendancy."

If such is the argument which has converted staunch Conservatives into eager though clumsy advocates of household suffrage, we will only observe that it appears to involve more than one large assumption. It implies that it is a matter of indifference to the true Conservative what type of Liberal be returned for a borough provided the election of a Tory cannot be secured; and again, it assumes that there are more questions on which the new urban electors, presumed to belong to the working classes, will differ from their own employers, than on which they are likely to differ from the landed interest without.

Both assumptions appear to us radically incorrect. It cannot be a matter of indifference to sincere Tories,—from their own point of view,—whether the bulk of the Liberal party are divided from them by serious divergencies of opinion on all most important points, and by a perfectly different mode of thought and feeling, or, on the other hand, simply by the maintenance of opposite views on some determinate point which does not exclude considerable fellow-feeling on many matters of vital interest. Of course, if what is looked for is merely the supremacy of a certain set of men, and not the possibility of a certain line of conservative policy, then a vote is simply a vote, and in party conflicts the vote of an advanced Radical will not count more than the vote of a moderate Whig. From a short-sighted and narrow party point of view it may seem a cunning stratagem to clip the influence of that portion of the liberal party which is likely to supplant the Conservatives in office, and to transfer power from them to the Radical section, which is less likely to gain immediate possession of the Treasury bench. But that the triumph of conservative principles could be secured by strengthening the hands of those who differ from them more, and weakening the hands of those who differ from them less, seems to us a somewhat extravagant supposition. Though the great changes in the borough constituencies were to have

but a small effect on the strength of parties, simply as far as the counting of heads is concerned, it may surely be wise to assume that changes in the constituencies will certainly be followed by changes in the character of representatives, and in the ultimate popularity and supremacy of various political opinions. For instance, the Conservatives would find it a different thing to be confronted by a majority of very advanced Liberals instead of having to contend against a mixed body, equally numerous, of very moderate Whigs and very determined Radicals. We do not wish to infer that this will actually be their fate. We simply put the case as a hypothesis to explain our view, that if the Tories have laid the unction to their souls that they have little to lose in the boroughs, which are already in the hands of their political rivals, they may find themselves much mistaken. On the contrary, we believe that real Liberalism,—not the personal prospects of any particular set of men, but the cause of popular principles,—will be greatly invigorated by the accession of the new electors, not from the point of view of any probable increase to the nominal majority of liberal members, but from the likelihood of a stronger and broader character being imparted to the creed which they will be called upon to hold. It seems to us far from improbable that household suffrage will greatly decrease the number of those who, though enrolled on the lists of the liberal party, and voting in party divisions on that side, hold liberal views only on a very limited number of defined questions, but otherwise are eminently conservative in tone. The degree to which this class of members has modified the action of the party hitherto can scarcely be exaggerated, and if we are not mistaken, it is on them that the blow avowedly struck by Lord Derby's Government at the liberal party will fall with the greatest force.

As regards the other assumption, that the new borough electors belonging to the working classes are likely to suppose that their interests clash more with those of their employers than with those of the landed interest, and that therefore it would be politic on their part to accept an alliance with aristocratic and territorial influences in order to be able to check, if not to coerce, the political power wielded by their fellow townsmen of the middle class, it appears to us that a closer inspection will prove it to be equally unreliable.

Such an alliance may be valuable to both parties in certain emergencies. The Factory Acts were originally carried by a similar combination, and questions may arise when, for temporary purposes, a coalition may again be formed; but on the vast majority of political subjects there will be more identity of interest and sympathy of feeling between the different classes of borough voters amongst themselves, than between the poorest class of borough electors and territorial lords. Take the important question of Taxation, and the broad issue as to the respective burdens to be borne by land or by trade. Here the interests of employed and employers would be iden-

tical. We suspect the manufacturer and the receiver of daily wages would be equally opposed to any burdens on the trade which sustained them both. Or take the case of some great calamity falling on a particular branch of industry; it would probably strike at masters and men alike. In some cases such calamities are indirectly due to political causes, in others they may be remedied or modified by political action. The cattle plague involved much imperial legislation, and the remedial measures taken by no means affected town and country alike. On what side would the new borough electors have been likely to be found? On the side of indemnifying cattle-owners at the public expense? On the side of that compact body of landowners and representatives of agricultural districts who took the opportunity of exhibiting to the House the overwhelming power which, notwithstanding any statistics to the contrary, is wielded by "land" in Parliament?

Or, to take another instance, is it probable that the working classes in towns will repay the landed interest for the undoubted help which it rendered them in carrying the Factory Acts, by aiding the representatives of agricultural districts in the resistance which they seem disposed to offer to legislation of the same kind applied to land? Ominous indications have already been given that conservative county gentlemen think compulsory legislation as to the conditions of employment, the length of working hours, and the education of children, to be all very well, and even highly desirable, as between manufacturers and their work-people, but that similar enactments would be misapplied if introduced to regulate the relations between themselves and their labourers. Is it conceivable that in such a resistance they would secure the support of the poorer borough householders?

There is another consideration which appears to us not without force. Independently of their recent admission to the franchise, the working classes have a very sufficient sense of their own power of resisting any coercion on the part of their employers, and we doubt whether there is any legislation in that direction at all justifiable in the eyes of the Conservatives, which a Tory Government could offer them as a bribe for their assistance on other measures. Besides, trades' unions have modified the situation very much, and have tended to change the current of public opinion very materially. Look in what direction we will, we fail to discover the actual questions on which the new electors are to display conservative instincts in the sense hitherto assigned to these words. Will they take the Tory views as to primogeniture and entails? Will they instruct their representatives to oppose Mr. Locke King's Bill, which would enact that in cases of intestacy, real property, instead of reverting to the eldest son, should be divided in the same way as personal property? This would be precisely one of those cases in which that vague attachment to existing institutions on which Mr. Disraeli pro-

fesses to build his hopes ought to come into play. Is it likely to be the case? What is the foundation for such a belief?

When we declare our entire inability to apprehend the points on which Mr. Disraeli believes the bulk of the new electors to be Tories at heart, we should not omit to state that we have in our minds the Toryism of the rank and file, the sentiments and views which animate the majority of the party,—that Toryism in which the Tories themselves really believe,—not the policy which their leaders adopt, either because they are in advance of their party, or on account of "political exigencies" which we need not explain. Lord Stanley's foreign policy, for instance, has been essentially liberal, and the cordiality, almost enthusiastic, with which many of his expositions were received by his parliamentary opponents contrasted somewhat remarkably with the very quiet and undemonstrative respect shown on such occasions by the country gentlemen, a class of men generally demonstrative enough. No doubt, too, Mr. Disraeli himself would gladly sketch a programme which would be very acceptable to those whom he looks upon as his new allies, but the programme would not be conservative; it would not be palatable to those on whose shoulders Mr. Disraeli has been lifted to his present position. Will he venture still further to run counter to their traditions and their prejudices, and induce them to import a number of new liberal heresies into their orthodox conservative creed? We trust that the Edinburgh banquet may have enlightened the public in this respect. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer on that occasion should repeat to his Scotch hosts, with the necessary amplifications, the interpretation of the Tory creed of which he delivered himself in the Mansion House at the close of the session, adding, above all, that as in foreign politics and in our dealings with subject races "the Tory party sought not for itself the spurious force to be derived from the advocacy of cosmopolitan principles," so in domestic questions it repudiated the spurious force to be derived by talking humanitarian jargon, he will hit the humour of what, till now, he has been able to call his party, and lull them into the belief that even if he carries measures which they do not understand, he is acting in a spirit entirely their own. If, on the other hand, he can afford to look rather to those whom he desires to win than to those whose support he carries in his pocket; if the adhesion of the new electors is to be secured, not so much to the measures and principles hitherto considered conservative, as to the men whom Conservatives put to the front, he will have boldly told his friends that they had so far only seen the beginning of his concessions, and that the abolition of flogging in the army, the surrender of the system of purchasing commissions, the modifications of the game laws, the final abandonment of the Parks Bill, the extension of the system of the Factory Acts to agricultural labour, the support of Mr. Locke King's Intestacy Bill, and of the Bill

for legalising marriages with a deceased wife's sister, will henceforth be considered part and parcel of the true Tory creed. If, at the same time, he should have stated that Government action would henceforth be more vigorous, and that the system of "laissez faire" and the doctrines of strict political economy would not be allowed to hamper his policy too much, we think he will have laid the ground for a very formidable alliance between the new electors and—himself.

If Mr. Disraeli chooses to call the result of that alliance, based on such a programme, the conservative party, he will have been right in supposing that the Reform Bill would secure ascendancy to the conservative cause; but if words and names are still to retain their meaning, far from believing in the possibility of such an event, we must confess that the examination of the various questions in which the new voters are likely to take an interest appears to us to lead to the very opposite conclusion. We do not mean to say that the new power created will be added to the forces of those who have hitherto been the acknowledged political rivals of the Conservatives. From one point of view, the "liberal party" may even be broken up. The wide latitude hitherto allowed to various shades of liberal opinions may be seriously narrowed, and amalgamation between the most advanced school and the more moderate Liberals may become more difficult than ever. There may be sore trials in store for that large number of men who have been honest Liberals all their lives, friends to Reform, keen for religious liberty, true to the backbone on most matters which have hitherto constituted the test of political loyalty, but who may yet be unable to fall in with the broader tone which already has begun to mark the temper and opinions, and will soon begin to mark the measures, of the great liberal party.

Few we think can be blind to the fact that "sentiment" is beginning to play a more important part in politics than it has been hitherto permitted to do. "Sentimental grievances" no doubt still meet with considerable ridicule, but the hearing accorded to them becomes more respectful, and the divisions taken with regard to them gain in importance. Conspicuous amongst sentimental grievances are some of the Irish questions. Many Irish questions of course involve practical grievances as well; but we are not at this moment thinking of Ireland. We have rather such subjects in our mind as are involved in the question of flogging, of capital punishment, the treatment of prisoners, the evils of agricultural gangs,—questions which, if we might use a very dangerous phrase, Frenchmen would analyse as connected with "the dignity of man." It appears to us that the new electors will impart a stimulus to this whole class of subjects, and that by their aid "sentiment," with its virtues and its faults, will make considerable progress in extruding cynicism from the very commanding position which it still occupies in politics. It cannot be denied that the lower

strata of society are much more sentimental than the upper, and that, above all, they do not shrink, in the same way, from displaying this side of their nature. And independently of this tendency on their part, in all cases where the State comes into contact with the individual, they have much more reason to be anxious lest the laws should tamper with their dignity as men. They know, on the one hand, that a certain class of considerations is less likely to weigh in their case, and, on the other, they feel that what may not be a humiliation to men whose position is recognised by society, may be a positive degradation to them. That they often degrade themselves by intemperance or improvidence does not affect their views in this respect; on the contrary, it enhances the feeling, and induces them to demand from the State not only to abstain in its dealings with them from degrading punishments, invidious distinctions, and all that tends to destroy their self-respect, but even to assist them in raising themselves by passing compulsory laws which might lessen their temptations and protect them against themselves.

We feel certain that for good or for evil the new electors will increase the strength of the sentimental section of the House of Commons, and we anticipate, further, that their influence will materially lessen the stringency with which the doctrines of "laissez faire" will be applied. We should not be surprised if, foremost among the issues which will divide the new Parliament, conflicts as to the limits within which the principle of "laissez faire" is to be permitted to rule should find a place. The new electors may demand that these limits should be narrowed, and may impose duties on Parliament and Government which would at present be considered as beyond their sphere. Compulsory legislation is less repelling to the lower than to the middle and upper classes. Government interference and protection have more attraction for those who find their class surrounded by evils and troubles from which they can scarcely perceive a way out themselves, than for those who are only afraid that their existing prosperity might be meddled with or disturbed. Besides, the stronger passions and the greater eagerness of a less-educated class make them more impatient of present evils and less sensitive as to the principles involved in their removal. Political economy, to which the old Radical party owed so many triumphs, and the country so vast an increase of prosperity, will be put on its mettle to resist many a fierce attack. The most advanced school of present Radicals themselves often lift their hand against it, and in no other respect will the actions of the new electors require to be more carefully watched.

We have already stated our belief that, in most measures which regard the person, the new electors will be on the same side as the bulk of the liberal party. What may we expect as regards laws affecting property? Will vested rights be regarded with the same veneration by men who enjoy none themselves as by men who have

themselves inherited vested rights for generations? We are of course not thinking of measures directly attacking private property,—of measures of spoliation. No one believes in any serious risk of such a kind, even if the present electors in towns and counties were not amply strong enough, when united, to outvote the newly-enfranchised class. But in all matters where endowments come into question,—endowments of schools, privileges of corporations, the property of the universities and colleges, ancient trusts,—the poorest class of householders will clearly be free from the fear which operates so strongly on a large class; "If we do this now, what next? If we touch corporate property, will private property not be exposed? Does not the title of the Irish Church to its revenues, of Trinity College to its property, rest on the same broad basis as the title of Knowsley or Woburn? May not the interference of Parliament with the legacies of pious founders of ancient trusts be followed by interference with our rights of tying up our property as we like, with entails, and, in the end, with primogeniture itself?" Such fears would clearly have little weight with the new electors. To say the least, they are as little likely to have prejudices in favour of vested rights as any other class, and if the Conservatives wish to rally them in defence of the endowments of religious or other bodies, it will have to be done by appealing, not to traditional claims, based on inheritance and the analogy of private property, but to services actually rendered, and present tangible usefulness.

Our space forbids us to push any further our inquiry into the probable bias of the new electors. We have scarcely alluded to the part which they are likely to play on ecclesiastical questions. Will they generally support the Established Church? Will they ratify the proud claims put forward on its part that it is the poor man's Church? Or will they not, at all events, first require that the churches should be really thrown open to the poor, and be in all senses free, so that the endowments should not only nominally, but substantially, relieve the mass of the people from taxing themselves for their religion?—or will they share the Dissenters' view that voluntary efforts should be substituted for endowments? On no subject should we anticipate greater difficulty than in forming correct conclusions as to what we may expect from the new electors in this respect. We should regard with much suspicion any statistics professing to register the extent of attachment, indifference, or antagonism to the Church among the newly-enfranchised householders. It is sometimes asserted that they will be thoroughly anti-Catholic; but, supposing this to be true, will they be Dissenters, or Churchmen, or Secularists? Will they unite with Dissenters and Secularists for the overthrow of the Establishment and the abolition of endowments; or will they, as regards the Church, justify Mr. Disraeli's confidence in their attachment to the existing institutions? We ourselves refrain from attempting to solve this

question. In this respect we confess Lord Derby's Reform Bill is to us really a "leap in the dark."

In other respects the darkness, as we hope to have shown, does not appear to be by any means impenetrable. We conceive that the new electors will, on the whole, throw most of their weight on to the most liberal side of the liberal party; that they will attribute an importance to sentimental questions which these questions have hitherto not been able to secure; that, as at home they will demand greater respect for the susceptibilities of their class, so abroad they will support rather the "cosmopolitan" than the dynastic element, and, on condition of our foreign policy falling in with their sympathies, will be more ready to fight than the existing constituencies; that in social questions they will require more vigorous action, a fiercer warfare against abuses, more Government interference; that in economical matters they will be less faithful to political economy; that in finance they will be on the side of trade rather than of land, of direct rather than of indirect taxation; that they will be less chary of touching vested rights, and more exacting as to public utility; and that there may even be a tendency to take a somewhat different view of the right definition of national prosperity. An immense responsibility will rest on those Liberals whose strength the Reform Bill has most tended to increase. It will be for them to direct the new forces into useful channels, while preventing them from overflowing the banks. For ourselves, we confess that we do not for a moment believe in any conservative views on the part of the "residuum," and we admit that among the new electors we shall look for many opinions different from those by which Parliament has hitherto been swayed. But we firmly believe that the accession of vigour and of new blood, the appreciation of the wants and feelings of millions of our fellow-subjects, the revelations on matters of which the majority of present electors are necessarily ignorant, the extension of sympathy with our forms of government which must result from the admission of many hundred thousands of voters belonging to a class which had hitherto few accredited channels for making its wishes known, will vastly increase the usefulness and the authority of Parliament, while the classes who have hitherto exclusively wielded political power will still retain ample strength to prevent their being overwhelmed by numbers on any question where they have right and justice on their side.

THE TOURIST AT HOME.

THERE are certain articles which seem to be stereotyped in the presses of our English newspapers. The "stoppage in the streets" indignation paper, the protest against female extravagance in dress, the warning against the speculative tendencies of the age, and a score of other leaders, are so familiar to the "constant reader," that when he takes up his favourite paper, and sees the first sentence, he can tell perfectly well what is coming, and how the article is about to conclude. Amongst the many traditions of the British press, one of the most cherished is that every paper which respects itself is bound to insert at least every year an article contrasting the advantages of home and foreign pleasure-travel,—always, we need hardly say, to the advantage of the former. Somebody,—one of that mysterious body, the unknown correspondents of the newspapers,—writes a letter complaining of some grievance he has sustained in his wanderings abroad. Forthwith a number of fellow-sufferers join in the chorus of complaint. A lively and animated controversy is set on foot as to the insolence,—let us say,—of Prussian railway officials, the absence of foot-baths in French hotels, the annoyances to which English ladies are subjected by the bold glances of foreign admirers, the impossibility of avoiding damp sheets in Swiss hotels, or any one of the countless afflictions to which travelling British flesh appears to be heir abroad. Then, when the topic is pretty well run dry, the paper, which in the dead season has hit upon an unexpected mine of wealth in the wrongs of its valued correspondents, winds up the discussion with one of the stereotyped articles to which we allude. After summing up the case, the leader, we may safely say, concludes somewhat after this fashion;—"Still, while appreciating the grievances of which our correspondents complain, we must tell them candidly that the remedy lies in their own hands. After all, nothing compels them to seek recreation in foreign countries, where tastes, habits, and social institutions are different from,—we might add, inferior to,—those of their native land. Strange as the statement may appear to many of our countrymen, there are districts within a few hours' easy journey of this metropolis whose beauties may be favourably compared with those of the most popular resorts of foreign travel. There are persons, no doubt, who will go from John o' Groats to the Land's End, as well as from Dan to Beersheba, and find that all is barren; but we have no sympathy with that hypercritical disposition which, in its enthusiasm for the

grandeur of continental scenery, can find no charm in the humbler but not less exquisite beauty of these varied islands. We have doubtless no mountains equal in magnitude to the Alpine ranges; our lakes cannot compete in size with those of Italy or Switzerland; our rivers are not rivals in volume of water of the Danube and the Rhine; our scenery is on a smaller scale, and on that account is generally the more enjoyable. What the tourist, however, may lose in grandeur, he will find amply compensated in comfort, economy, and freedom from annoyance. Travel, like charity, should begin at home; and if the complaints to which we have given currency should be the means of directing the stream of tourists to the countless scenes of beauty with which the United Kingdom is so richly studded, we shall have done a service to the travelling public."

Some such article as this we must all of us have read at least a score of times in our life. Correspondents, under the signature of "A True Briton," or "John Bull," or "Old England," and who generally would be found at home making their bread as innkeepers or lodging-house owners in English watering-places, write to thank the journal for its able and pathetic appeal on behalf of English scenery; and there the controversy drops. Still our countrymen and countrywomen who want a holiday cross the channel with as much persistency as if the articles in question had never been indited. And our private opinion is, that if all the newspapers in England went on repeating the same exhortations daily from now till next June, there would be no sensible diminution in the number of tourists who will leave England next season for the Continent. Lord Macaulay says that one of the few things in which people really follow their own taste is in the books they buy. We are inclined to include, among the number of things on which people act according to their own pleasure, the tours they take. No doubt there is a good deal of fashion about the resorts of tourists, as about other matters. Zermatt, for instance, has of late years got something of the prestige which formerly attached to Interlaken; but there is no perceptible change in the general current of fashion. Each year, as the facilities of locomotion increase, the tide of tourists sets in more and more strongly for the Continent;—less for our home pleasure-resorts. There is no good in ignoring this fact, or in seeking to explain it by some accidental or transient cause. The only rational account to be given of this phenomenon is that English people prefer spending their holidays abroad to spending them at home. Why they so prefer is a point on which we wish to offer a few suggestions. Partly from desire, partly from necessity, a large portion of the present writer's life has been spent in foreign travel, so that we have acquired a considerable amount of that singularly useless knowledge,—acquaintance with the resorts of tourists in many lands. Of late, circumstances have led us to visit several of our chief home pleasure-grounds; and it is from a comparison of our past and present experiences that we

have arrived at the conclusions we desire to lay before the readers of Saint Pauls.

In some not unimportant respects, even if the scenery of Great Britain were far more beautiful than it is, and if the accommodations of home travel were infinitely superior to what they are, our native shores would never be equal to foreign resorts for a native tourist in search of rest. We, even the idlest and wealthiest of us, live very hard and very fast in this land of ours; far harder and far faster than any nation, unless it be our kinsmen across the Atlantic. We crowd as much occupation, whether it be of work or pleasure, into the four-and-twenty hours as they will well bear; and we hardly know what it is to enjoy the luxury of doing nothing. And so, when holiday-time comes round, our natural instinct is to seek change,—to get out of the old treadmill in which we have been toiling,—to leave behind us, as far as possible, the very memory of our labour. Now, in England this is hardly possible to us. Wherever we go we see men engaged in the same restless round of occupation as that from which we have escaped for a season. England, even if we throw in Scotland and Ireland, is a small place as far as area goes, after all; and wherever we may turn, we hear the same ideas uttered, more or less in the same language, read the same papers, and live the same lives. But the moment we have crossed the Straits of Dover we are in a new world, filled with people who speak another tongue, think other thoughts, have other ways, and who, whether for better or worse, are other than the men and women amongst whom our lives are spent. Judging from our own experience, we should say that one day at Boulogne, or Calais, or Dieppe gives more change, and therefore more rest, to the mind of an Englishman than a week spent at Brighton, or Bath, or Cheltenham.

Still, if the longing to change their normal surroundings was the main cause which drives English holiday folk away from home, it would follow that the same causes ought to act elsewhere after the same fashion. Yet we do not find this to be the case. The tourists of other countries travel chiefly in their own lands; and even if they venture beyond its confines they seldom, if ever, come to England for pleasure. Of the thousands of foreign families,—French, German, and Russian,—who crowd every year to the sea-bathing resorts on the coast, from Ostend in the north to Biarritz in the south, not one in five hundred ever even dreams of crossing over for a change to one of our English watering-towns. There must be a reason for this, and that reason we take to consist in this simple fact;—that if you are travelling for pleasure, you can get your pleasure so much more easily, cheaply, and satisfactorily abroad than you can with us.

We have no wish to deny the genuine beauties of our own land. But still it argues no lack of patriotic feeling to admit that our show regions, our lakes and mountains, are not to be reckoned in the same

rank as those of Switzerland or Italy or the Tyrol or Norway. Still, if we have no objects,—to use the word in its French signification,—of extraordinary beauty, we have a great amount of pretty country, pleasant to gaze upon and travel in. Indeed, in its peculiar tranquil homely order of beauty, the whole of the south of England seems to us, after having seen many lands, the fairest of its kind of any country that we know. Then, too, we must also grant that the climate of these isles is not exactly adapted to holiday travelling. The utter absence of certainty about our weather at any period of the year tells heavily against the claims of England as a ground for tourists. During the summer season you may have wet days, abroad; but that bugbear of all holiday-goers, a week of continued rain,—an event so common with us,—is a contingency hardly anticipated in foreign summer travel.

Thus, if you want change, or if you wish to feast your eyes on the highest beauties of nature or art, or if you desire fine weather, you naturally go abroad. Still there are such hosts of well-to-do tourists who, from a variety of reasons easily to be imagined, would sooner stop within the Four Seas than seek their recreation abroad, that none of these explanations are quite sufficient to show why you so seldom hear of English people taking a tour for pleasure in their own country. We go to different places to bathe, or hunt, or shoot, or fish; but we, as a rule, no more think of travelling about England for the pleasure of doing so than we should dream of reading old sermons for our own amusement. Oddly enough, perhaps, the same remark applies to America. There is more locomotion in the States than in any other country; but the natives do not travel about South America as tourists. And the reason we imagine to be, on both sides the Atlantic, that home travel, as compared with continental, is so dear, so uncomfortable, and, above all, so dull.

It is very hard, without entering into details which our space would not permit of, to compare precisely the relative cost of travelling and of hotel expenses abroad and at home. Very long experience, however, has led us to the conclusion that the cost of hotel life on the Continent, taking one place with another, and assuming that you spare yourself no ordinary comfort, and live, in fact, on the footing of the "most favoured" guest, does not exceed twenty francs a day. In England, on the other hand, you have to be very careful if you wish to keep your bill within a pound a day. As to railway fares, they are notoriously higher here than in France, and far higher than in Germany. It costs you more to get from London to Edinburgh or Dublin than it does to get from the same place to Paris or Brussels,—travelling in both cases by express trains at first-class fares. But these long through routes are not the fair test of the cost of travelling in England. If you wish to see the country pleasantly, you naturally prefer to travel short distances, going from point to point where you may desire to stop. Let

any traveller act upon this suggestion, and make the journey from London to Scotland, halting at all the different spots he would individually wish to visit along his road, and then compare the amount of his different railway fares with what he would have paid had he traversed the same distance straight through! For some reason,—or, perhaps, for none,—any halt, or stop, or change of carriage in this country is attended with an outlay not required abroad. We do not say people cannot travel cheaply, if they choose, in England; but they must travel uncomfortably if they do; and the first essential for the enjoyment of ordinary travel is that you should be comfortable, and not be bothered about the necessity of looking after shillings and sixpences.

But our chief complaint is, that even if you are tolerably indifferent to expense, you still cannot find comfort in English pleasure-travelling. A great, and by no means the least important, portion of the traveller's existence must be passed in inns. Now, at our English hotels you have undoubtedly the necessaries of travel life, but you have a very small allowance of the luxuries. No man travelling on business has any cause to complain if he gets clean beds, and wholesome food, and decent lodging. These things you can get in our English hostelries as well as in those of any other country; and persons who, like ourselves, have travelled much in countries where clean linen and eatable victuals are rarely to be found, can alone tell what a void in life is caused by their absence. Still, if you are travelling simply and solely for your own gratification, you do desire something more than negative virtues in your purveyors of entertainment. There are a few first-class hotels scattered over England; but still we cannot recall one which has anything of beauty, or elegance, or attractiveness, to recommend it. There are hundreds of inns, known to every continental tourist, which the traveller remembers with a sort of sentimental regard, which he would regret never to visit again, which he would go out of his way to avoid missing on his journeys. Of what single English hotel, from the Clarendon downwards, could a like assertion be made with any degree of credibility? It may be said that hotels like the Bellevue at Dresden, the Bauer at Zurich, the Italia at Florence, owe much to outlooks not to be matched in these islands. This is true; but then, even in English towns where a picturesque view is to be had, our great inns are seldom if ever placed in such positions as to command the view. In fact, the idea that an hotel can, or should be, made anything but a place in which a guest may sleep comfortably and eat decently, seems never to have penetrated the mind of the British landlord. Yet, if you are travelling for pleasure only, you must necessarily pass a considerable period of time within your hotel during which you can neither eat nor sleep. Portions of existence so passed are very dreadful to pass through, not pleasant even to look back upon.

It is not always possible to have a sitting-room to yourself, and if you do, you increase your rate of expenditure by at least a half. Moreover, from the very nature of things, the great bulk of the guests at any British inn must necessarily be sitting-roomless. And if it is fine, you cannot be always out of doors; if it rains,—and in our hill-districts it generally does rain,—you must perforce stop indoors. You may, if you like, sit in your bed-room. They are all alike, these English sleeping-places,—the small rooms with the large beds; the chest of drawers covered with a whity-brown macassar; the dingy, gloomy paper; the deal table; the bare walls; the three cane-bottomed chairs; the mahogany washing-stand; the Bible with the name of the hotel stamped upon it,—are common to them all. If you get tired and weary of sitting in your bed-room, you can descend into the public coffee-room. Eating is generally going on there in some form or other all through the day. It is only in a very few of our newest hotels that drawing-rooms exist as an institution; and the smell of meals that have just been, or are now being, or are just about to be, eaten, hangs always about the British coffee-room. A couple of straight-backed black horsehair-covered sofas, a number of chairs of the same material, a sarcophagus-looking sideboard, and a long table, which is always being taken to pieces to have fresh joints added or subtracted, complete the furniture. A county directory, a local newspaper, one copy of the Times, which is generally in hand, and half a dozen placard advertisements of different life-assurance societies, are all the intellectual resources provided for the inmates of this chamber of horrors. If you belong to the male gender, you may possibly smoke in some damp out-of-the-way recess; or, if you are lucky, you may even find a billiard-room, and have a game with a mouldy marker. But if you belong to the fairer half of creation, or have ladies in your party, then you cannot well but chose the coffee-room as your only resort. It may be said that the salles-à-manger of continental inns are not ideal resorts for weather-bound tourists. We acknowledge the justice of the objection; but then it should also be allowed that they are not quite so deadly-lively as English coffee-rooms; that inn bed-rooms abroad are commonly bright, cheerful, airy rooms, which you can use as sitting-rooms with comfort; and, above all, that the smallest continental town, in any of the districts which are frequented by tourists, offers resources not available in similar places at home.

Not very many months ago it was our lot to pass two nights within a short interval of each other at two watering-places on the French and English coasts. In both cases we were delayed accidentally, and were unacquainted with a living soul at the place of our night's sojourn; we had neither books nor occupation; we were thrown entirely upon the resources of the place for amusement. On this side the channel we passed one of the dreariest evenings in our recollection. We ordered

dinner, which, as usual in such places, consisted of the invariable sole and mutton cutlet; we walked up and down the pier to get an appetite; we spent as much time as possible over dinner; and then the evening had closed in. We found there were still some four hours which must elapse before we could go to bed. Of public amusements there was nothing, or next to nothing. Mr. Woodin had given his entertainment some days before; and the sisters "Sophia and Anne" were expected in the ensuing week; but the only available place of entertainment open was a fifth-rate music-hall, chiefly patronised by the seafaring population of the place. The billiard-room, which was also the smoking-room, was filled with a number of local young men about town, whose jokes were not interesting to a stranger; and after a stroll through the half-lit, shabby streets, we were obliged to come back to the coffee-room, and amuse ourselves with the advertisement sheet of an old London newspaper which chanced to have been left there.

Across the channel, though the size, character, and "reason of being" of the two towns were exactly similar, our only difficulty lay in the selection of amusements. There was a table-d'hôte dinner, where—the guests being English tourists abroad—there was a good deal of conversation. Before dinner there was an open-air concert given on the pier, at which all the rank and fashion and beauty of the town displayed itself for the benefit of the public. In the evening there was a performance at the theatre, where the acting,—and that is perhaps not saying much,—was up to the rank of an ordinary London playhouse. Besides this, there were the public reception-rooms, open to any decently-dressed stranger on the payment of a franc. The night we were there a concert was given in the rooms; the night following there was to be a ball; the night after that a conjuring performance. Besides, you could cut in, if you liked, at a rubber of whist; you could lose your money in a raffle; you could play at pool in one of the brightest and pleasantest billiard-rooms we have ever seen. And if you preferred wandering about the town, you could look into rows upon rows of bright shop-windows; you could go into a score of handsome cafés, and sit there for as long as you liked at the cost of a few halfpence. It may be said that none of these amusements are very exciting,—that they are all of a frivolous character, in which grown-up people ought not to take delight. But our experience leads us to believe that grown-up travellers are very like children, and want amusement as much as if they had only just left school before they started on their journey. The result of our two evenings passed thus at home and abroad was to cause us to form a mental resolution to avoid the English watering-place in our future travels, and to take the earliest opportunity of re-visiting the French one. We quote this experience of ours because it is one whose truth any of our readers may verify for himself with-

out difficulty. A couple of nights passed alternately at Ramsgate and Ostend, Folkestone and Boulogne, Brighton and Dieppe, Hastings and Trouville, will serve, we think, to point a lesson which many years of travel have impressed upon us.

The chief reason then, as we take it, why British holiday-makers who can contrive to get abroad do so almost invariably instead of visiting the pleasure-grounds of their own land, is the total want of amusement provided for tourists in these islands. On a home tour the evenings are mortally and drearily long. We are writing these lines at one of the brightest and most popular of English sea-side towns. The place lives upon visitors, and, but for being a resort of visitors, has no means of existence. Yet, beyond providing them at high rates with board and lodgings, it does nothing whatever for their entertainment. There are no public rooms, no town bands, no sea-side walks or drives, as there would be at any continental watering-place of half the size; there is not even such a thing as a tolerable reading-room where you can see the papers. We have barrel-organs, Ethiopian serenaders, and a Punch and Judy show; but otherwise we have no kind of entertainment. Not only is there no theatre open, but there is not a stage in the town on which plays could be acted. A spectroscope, whatever that may be, has been throughout some three weeks the sole amusement provided for the public of what the guide-books inform us is one of the most fashionable and frequented of the watering-places in the south of England. Nor are we much better off in the way of those creature comforts of which we English people fancy we possess almost a monopoly. The lodging-houses are as bare and comfortless as English lodging-houses are wont to be. The culinary resources of these establishments do not extend beyond chops and steaks and plain roast meat, not bad things doubtless in their way, but still viands which the least dainty palate may find monotonous after a limited time. Yet practically you must either dine at home or not dine at all.

At the one large hotel in the town you can dine with economy for about ten shillings a head, and even then you have an inferior dinner to what you would get at any second-rate restaurant in France for less than half the money. In the whole town there is not a single restaurant, café, or dining-room where you can get anything to eat. Yet, in most respects, I should say this place was above the average of European sea-side towns. The air is beautiful, the sea view remarkably fine, and the surrounding country very pretty; but, with all this, it is inferior as a sojourning place for tourists to foreign baths of far smaller natural beauties, simply because nature has been left to do everything, and art nothing.

So, in the long run, it comes to this, that we all of us think our neighbours would do well to patronise English watering-places and lakes and mountains, to stop in their own country when they are out

for a holiday, to spend their money among their own people. But the moment we are called on to choose a holiday tour for ourselves, we at once, and without hesitation, go abroad. We do so because we cannot find the same comforts or amusements or accommodation at home as we do upon the Continent; and though we may fancy others ought to do without these things, we are not disposed to part with them ourselves when we are travelling for the sake of enjoyment. Of course we shall be told that home life can only be had at England; that our people, happily for themselves, do not spend their evenings at theatres and cafés, but take their pleasure in the bosom of their families; and that, therefore, the sources of recreation which are open to the continental pleasure-seeker are not available to our native tourists when on "pleasure bent." The "pleasure of the domestic fireside" argument is often driven further than it will bear; but, to a certain extent, it is sound; and we admit that the home life of England could hardly be what it is if our cities offered greater resources of entertainment to the homeless traveller. But exactly for that reason, though we may select to live in England, we prefer to spend our holidays away from its shores. We share this conviction with the overwhelming majority of the tourist world, and our only wonder is that, in the face of the experience of years, our papers should still go on repeating assertions about the charms of English travel which writers and readers alike know at heart to be false and groundless.

SECRETS.

Strange things we reck not of, or reck in vain,
In calm mysterious splendour round us reign;
  His kingdom still, until His kingdom come.
The heart that loves them knoweth not their ways,
Nor understandeth half the hymns of praise
  They sing to comfort us, and lead us home.

And of all marvels that creation hoards,
The sweet deep secrets, past the reach of words,
  I know no marvel like my love for thee.
The treasure of my heart, unseen, untold,
Lies hidden, low, as do the sands of gold,
  And rends it as the lightning rends the tree.

In every change, through nature's harmonies,
Some hidden charm, some dear new wonder lies;
  Some tender story that we fail to read.
The green leaves whisper things we cannot hear;
The stars unnoted vanish from their sphere;
  And wounds no skill can fathom inly bleed.

The dews and storms of snow their courses run;
Light was, before the word which called the sun;
  The winter and the summer rains must fall.
In the new birth the bright life perisheth;
The sleep by which we live resembles death.
  Only the hand that made them knoweth all.

Within the fern's sweet stem the oak lies hidden,
Till by love's art the scented veil is riven;
  Neither is love neglected, lost or dead.
From the decay of verdure and of flowers,
New plants spring up, the sweetest in our bowers;
  And memory embalms the joy that's fled.

In the far west, the solitary bird
Makes through the night its solemn music heard,
  Chanting the "Miserere" low and sad.
The wild woods echo the unearthly cry,
And stricken souls in midnight silence sigh,
  Sighs that are prayers, to make the morning glad.

But while these tender marvels fade away,
Each in its fleeting hour, its passing day,
  And each with death, and with oblivion rife,
My love is part of immortality;
A human soul's desire, which cannot die;
  The sweet and bitter secret of a life.

THE DECAY OF THE STAGE.

PERHAPS one of the greatest delusions of the day is, the pleasant delusion that there exists a "sound healthy taste" for the drama, and that now, if ever, are the palmy days of the stage. The number of theatres, the state of the profession,—like every other, overcrowded,—the perfection to which scenery and machinery have been brought, the salaries, and the crowded houses, are substantial evidence of this palminess,—an epithet which somehow has been considered the special property of things theatrical. With pieces "running" one hundred and two hundred nights, with such triumphs of "realism" as coal-mine shafts, water caves, set streets, city offices reproduced; and, above all, conflagrations, house-burnings, that to the eye can hardly be distinguished from the original models, with water, fire, ice, grass, imitated perfectly, and with the easier resource, where it can be done, of bringing the real objects themselves on the stage, things surely ought to look palmy. Yet it may be declared that if we were to take the sense of the profession generally, managers and actors, it would be admitted that decay is setting in. The mechanists, scene-painters, and actors,—they are named according to their proper precedence,—are at this end of their tether. They have exhausted their fertile fancy. The burlesque "arrangers" and actors have tried every conceivable physical extravagance within the compass of "break-downs," low dresses, goddesses looped up at the knee, parodies of songs, &c. The mythology is run out. The opera stories are done. So, too, with scenic effects. In real life there are only half-a-dozen tremendous and dramatic physical catastrophes which can confound and surprise. When we have seen a fire, an earthquake, a breaking of the ice and drowning, an accident, very few things remain either difficult to imitate or likely to astonish. We have had all this. But one "sensation" effort remains untried, the hint of which is at the service of the skilful playwright,—the running off the line of a train, and its being precipitated over a bridge. What will come next? It must be something of this "school," new, but of lower interest, in which case our excitement will be languid. The man who has drunk brandy always, will find tea insipid. So with the break-downs, the dressing, the mythology, and the vulgar parodies of songs. They can only reproduce now. By-and-by even the admirers of this class of entertainment will find that the stage has grown dull.

But for others, who expect another sort of entertainment, it may

be fairly asked, is not the stage dull now? How many are there who set out for the night's amusement, with a complacent alacrity of anticipation, as Johnson might say, and by eleven o'clock are suffering a strange agony, compounded of tediousness, fatigue, a sort of eternal weariness, and a sense that the whole will never end! Of course we hear laughter and sounds of enjoyment in the body of the house; but it must be remembered that here are persons who have been working hard all the day and all the year, and to whom, perhaps, the annual visit to the play-house, the sight of the company, the lights, the gay scenery, is a treat. The cheap test of what is called a run now-a-days is no evidence of a flourishing profession. A certain class of people must go to the theatre to fill in their evenings; and, above all, it must be remembered that the London theatres are the theatres for the kingdom, and that the audiences are changing every night. The manager is catering for England, Ireland, and Scotland, and a sprinkling from the Continent. This is another result of a fatal centralisation, and, it may be added, of the "sensation" system now in fashion. These costly spectacles will not pay unless exhibited for so many hundred nights. Sight is a much more costly sense than hearing; the eye is more extravagant than the ear, as any manager knows; but no manager has discovered as yet,—none at least have had the courage to act on the discovery,—that the mind is the cheapest of all to entertain. This we will understand presently. But as to this decay, what is the sense of the profession? It will tell us that "it is going to the bad;" that the stage is going down, but that actors are flourishing. Salaries are high and well paid—to "stars." The profession, they will tell you, is in confusion. It is a scramble. Neither training nor genius tells. The fellow of yesterday,—raw, untutored,—has the same chance as the old hand of ten or fifteen years. Like the labourers in the vineyard, those who come last are paid as liberally as those who have worked all the day long. And it may be asked, why not? Good looks and a handsome face and a pert voice do not improve by service,—are rather in better condition the first day. A tyro of a week's standing can wear a short dress as well, if not more becomingly, than a lady who has served in the ranks. A few weeks' training will teach the steps of a break-down. In short, the physical gifts which sensation requires are found by nature.

We can make no reasonable protest against Pantomimes. They are a genuine show; belong to their proper season; and come in well as an alterative. They do not pretend to be more than they are. The great Garrick had his pantomime every Christmas. We have the associations of that cheerful season,—of the delighted row of children's faces, whose exquisite relish of the show should be a hint to the grown-up as to the class of audience whom such things were meant to entertain. Just as the conductor of the Grand Opera lays down his bâton when the ballet begins, and disappears, and another gentle-

man of inferior degree takes his place, so may the Drama gracefully gather up her dress, and sweep away with dignity during that merry time, abdicating for a few weeks in favour of her Cinderella sister.

The truth is,—and we have been approaching this gradually,—the proper entertainment of the drama has passed away. The delightful amusement that used to be known as "the Stage" is not with us now. It is gone; and with it the associations, the tone of mind and training which led audiences to enjoy it so exquisitely. Instead, the eye is feasted and the ear. The vulgar enjoyments of the senses are gratified. Scenery and accompaniments, which in the old days were merely a set-off, an adornment, have usurped the chief place. We are in an utterly false groove. As was said at the beginning, we are no longer amused, simply because we have given up the true "stage," and have gone after a pure fiction and sham,—a series of costly shows. Sight-seeing in cities is, as we all have found, the most wearisome thing in the world.

What is the true foundation of theatrical enjoyment? It is found in the picture of human life,—the play of mind on mind, of passion on passion, of wit on wit, set off by shrewd observations and elegant treatment. It is the spectacle of mental action. The old Greeks understood this perfectly, and had the finest principle for the tragedy in the world, based on the Pagan belief that soul was the creature of destiny, and at the same time possessed the exercise of this free will. Here were elements for a splendid dramatic struggle; the good man struggling to do what was right, exercising his will, sacrificing his inclination, and yet at the same time forced on to destruction by the secret unseen power of destiny acting on events and circumstances. Such a struggle would absorb an audience whose faith was in such a contrast. The whole city looked on in those vast amphitheatres, and from these masters we can learn the true subordinate position of scenery. They had one grand scene, which was invariably the outside of a temple, splendid and dignified, a sort of link between the dramatic and real life,—not wholly real nor wholly scenic. Indeed, reverting for a moment to the topic we have left, it may be said the more ambitious and perfect scenery becomes, the more narrowly and minutely it attempts to reproduce nature, the more does it bring about a sort of désillusionment. The surprising elaborateness, instead of satisfying, challenges the doubts of the spectators. It is so well done that it must be unreal. The true position of scenery, as associated with the drama, is indicative; it should travel no higher than a general effect; and I firmly believe that a good play should not be set off by anything more ambitious than an interior of a drawing-room or a cottage, a forest, a street,—all elegantly done of their kind, but more or less conventional. Elaborate set pieces,—mimicries of waterfalls, fires, drownings, &c.—should be all relegated to scenic pieces in art, to show off such tours de force. They should be subsidiary.

This can be very well illustrated by an instance taken from the

decoration of pottery, and the law which regulates that branch of art. We often see a whole dinner-service "illustrated," as it were, by painters of eminence; every plate set down before the guest having a fine landscape in the centre. This is admitted to be an entirely false system, for the result is not a decorated plate, but a landscape painted on a plate. The plate has sunk into a secondary object; it has been devoured by what was meant to adorn it. So with scenery and the drama. And instead of the former being used so as to set off the latter, the dramatic artist is now set to work to put together a few characters and dialogues to set off the scenery and effects.

The bearing of this fatal corruption on "the music-hall question," which is now attracting attention, is more direct than would be supposed. It is the very decay of the stage that has brought theatres to the degradation of being threatened by the competition of such places. The truth is, it is the theatres which have encroached on the music-hall business; and as they have descended to the competition, they must bear the consequences of defeat. The music-hall is quite dans son droit. It provides a class of show which appeals to the eye and ear,—which requires no exertion of the mind, no attention even,—which is so bold in outline as to allow of eating and drinking and conversation going on at the same time. The real drama, true comedy, and tragedy,—observe, not the buffoonery of our existing comic dramas, which have no story and no dialogue,—require the most perfect silence and attention to follow the plot and the delicate wit of the dialogue. Mind, as well as eye and ear, must be kept at work. Here is the distinction that should keep music-halls and theatres ever distinct. Both would flourish. But on the present system,—with a sensation piece running, with tremendous scenic effects, and a plot that appeals to the eye,—the pots and glasses and little tables might be present in the pit, and do very little harm. Such theatres are half music-halls already.

The palmy days of the drama were the days of the good old comedies, beginning perhaps about a hundred and twenty years ago with Garrick's management of Drury Lane. When we see that under his judicious reign of nearly thirty years, everything rose from the most utter chaos into order; that fine actors were trained, fine plays written for the fine actors to act, and fine and never-failing audiences came to see the fine plays which the fine actors acted; and that the moment he retired, and the wayward Brinsley took up the reins, disorder and decay set in once more, it is impossible not to come to the conclusion that judicious management has much to do with the control of the public taste. Actors and actresses, with the exception of the few who have to struggle against their own system,—where are they? Good acting lies buried under the heavy folds of cumbrous scenery. There is no school, no training, no serving in the ranks, as the old actors did. As I have shown, such is not wanting for the sensation

pieces. There is no opportunity to train good actors, for when a piece "runs" three-quarters of a year there can be no training. In the real palmy times of the drama a piece ran at most nine nights together; but it was judiciously put into the répertoire and played at short intervals during the season. In a theatre like Garrick's Drury Lane, with a staff of clever actors, and a large staff too, each one had his department and round of characters;—all would have ranked as "stars" now;—and each night of the week brought a different play, perhaps different actors, and an infinite variety. For this too is one of the features and healthy conditions of the drama,—constant change,—and it trains while it amuses. We may look back to the cast of the "School for Scandal" on its first night with a sort of despair, and think with wonder what acting must have been, with performers like King, Gentleman Smith, Jack Palmer, Yates, Parsons, Dodd, Aikin, Farren, Abington, Pope, and Hopkins. Fortunate indeed the play of which it has been said, that no new performer ever appeared in any one of its parts, who was not inferior to the person who played it originally. All these had been trained at Drury Lane, and formed in a correct school,—a school that insisted on principles of judicious, bold, yet regulated expression. Absolutely in our time has been lost, with the other good histrionic things, the art of filling the house with the voice, and of making the features play. Above all, too, has been lost or forgotten the art of making words tell,—the weighty, yet natural way of delivery which comes of study, play, practice. We may see traces of this sort of delivery in the few old actors who were so brought up in the traditions of the old school, and whose delivery of a single sentence seems to make it tell in quite a surprising way. The old school of humour is quite gone. The modern fashion is like all the rest, addressed to the eye. A modern farce relies on a ridiculous merry-andrew dress, forced catch-words repeated again and again, a kind of rapid pattering from the throat, in a grotesque twang, a speaking out of the corner of the mouth, and abundant "gag." All is absurd, exaggerated buffooning, and out of nature. This is broad modern farce. The French farce lies in comic but not very far-fetched situations,—like that in "Box and Cox"—which is carried off by surprisingly natural acting and an understood air of burlesque. We steal these things, vulgarise them into downright earnest, and force incidents which are natural to French life and manners into British dress and habits to which they are wholly foreign; turning the light French blagueur,—a Charles Jules,—into a vulgar Mr. Tittimus in pink and blue trousers.

If we look at Zoffany's portraits, or at pictures of scenes from plays which he painted, we can catch a faint notion of what was the principle of humour then. It was purely intellectual; it was unconscious. The Garrick face in Abel Drugger,—all stupid delight, joy, expectation, and vanity,—shows what a surprising power of expression he

had, and how much could be done by the face. There was an absurd or ludicrous situation, and the actor threw himself into it, and aimed at being perfectly and naturally in earnest, striving to exhibit a real terror and genuine alarm, which is the true secret of a comic situation. Our present comic rule is to exhibit comic pantomime in any crisis,—something grotesque, but inappropriate.

There is a well-known essay of Lamb's on the artificial comedy of the last century, in which he deals with the delicacies of the playing in the "School for Scandal," and which shows fatally that we have not the drama now. It gives us a faint glimpse of what acting was, and it may be confessed that to see it in the hands of one of our existing performers,—to whom, no doubt, it is unfamiliar,—would be almost amusing. It certainly would not be his notion of acting. There were refinements then in playing that we never dream of now. "When I remember," says Charles Lamb, speaking of Jack Palmer, "the gay boldness, the graceful solemn plausibility, the measured step, the insinuating voice, ... the downright acted villany of the part, so different from the pressure of conscious actual wickedness—the hypocritical assumption of hypocrisy, ... I must needs conclude the present generation of play-goers more virtuous than myself, or more dense. . . . . A player with Jack's talent, if we had one now, would not dare to do the part in the same manner. He would instinctively avoid every turn which might lead to unrealise, and so to make the character fascinating. He must take his cue from his spectators. . . . . John Palmer was twice an actor in this exquisite part; he was playing to you all the while that he was playing upon Sir Peter and his lady. . . . The pleasant old Teazle, King, too, is gone in good time. His manner would not have passed current in our day. . . . Joseph Surface, to go down now, must be a downright revolting villain,—no compromise. His first appearance must shock and give horror. Oh, who that remembers Parsons and Dodd,—the wasp and butterfly of the 'School for Scandal,' and charming, natural Miss Pope, the perfect gentlewoman as distinguished from the fine lady of comedy,—would forego the true scenic delight,—the escape for life, the oblivion of consequences, the holiday barring-out of the Pedant Reflection,—those Saturnalia of two or three brief hours,—to sit instead at one of our modern plays?" I repeat, is not all this,—and there are many pages of this exquisite analysis,—utterly unintelligible to our modern actor,—certainly to the play-goers? "The escape from life," or "holiday barring-out," is not to be found at the play-house. I say again, this delicate refining on refining is a lost art. Managers and actors will say, We have tried comedies and pieces of this intellectual sort; they fail, and do not draw. The reason is, they are not acted; the parts are played according to the conventional canons of our "sensation" times.

In those days London audiences were not literally shut out of their

own theatres by one piece keeping possession of the house for months. I open one of Geneste's wonderful ten volumes,—monuments of laborious industry,—and choose a place at random. The following is a month's bill of fare:—The Beggar's Opera (Miss Pope); Macbeth (Garrick and Mrs. Barry); London Merchant; Clandestine Marriage (King); Mourning Bride; Rival Queens; Richard III. (Garrick); Merchant of Venice; School for Lovers (Mrs. Baddeley); Padlock (Dibdin and Bannister); All in the Wrong; Suspicious Husband (Garrick); Zara; As You Like It; The Revenge (Holland); The Stratagem; Much Ado about Nothing; Cymbeline (Miss Younge); The Wonder (Garrick); Othello; Artaxerxes; Tamerlane. Those were the days of entertainment! No wonder the stage entered largely into social life; no wonder there were good houses, and that people could talk of "going to the theatre" with enjoyment.

But leaving actors, and looking to the plays that used to be written, a feeling almost of despair will come upon us. Going to the library, and taking down even a few of these pieces, we shall be astounded at the store of wit, gaiety, and, above all, of humour. Putting what is now written beside them, the writing, as well as the acting, would seem to be a lost art. What brightness, what briskness and gaiety, even where wit was wanting! The collection of characters, the tide of humour, all in the key of Fielding and Steele,—which turns on character writing, not on the poor quiddities of punning and catch-words,—is indeed surprising. The gallery of portraits is long, and painted in the freshest, clearest colours. Each character is round and distinct; or even where there was a failure or inferiority, there was the attempt at being round and distinct. There were characters for actors to play, and actors to play the characters. Even now, when the drama makes a faint attempt at rally, it takes the shape of story, not of character,—an utter forgetfulness of what is the true function of a play, that oft-quoted holding a mirror up to nature and not to the novel or story-book. For what does nature show us in common life? Not these extraordinary and exceptional adventures, but character, and its operation on other characters, which, artfully suspended or checked, constitutes the true secret of dramatic interest and amusement.

What a series, I say again! Colley Cibber,—so fresh, bold, and full of spirit, with his pleasant "Careless Husband," whose admirable Lord Foppington and fashionable people, seem to have furnished the whole tone and treatment for the "School for Scandal." The gaiety and intellectual bustle,—for the plots are not very strong,—are as natural as can possibly be conceived; and the whole always sparkles with good humour and good things, not ostentatiously introduced, but flowing naturally from the cheerfulness of the characters. Where can we now find dialogue like this?

"*Lady B.* Why, what would you have one do? For my part, I would no more choose a man by my eye than a shoe——

"*Lady E.* But I'd no more fool on with a man I could not like than I'd wear a shoe that pinched me.

"*Lady B.* Ay; but a poor wretch tells me he'll widen them, or do anything, and is so civil and silly that one does not know how to turn such a trifle as a pair of shoes or a heart upon a fellow-creature's hands again."

The reader will see there is nothing forced in the introduction and sustaining of this pleasant metaphor. It is merely the natural flow of spirits of two lively ladies. So, too, when Lady Easy says that a lady's favours are not to be like places at court, "held for life," Lady Betty Modish replies that "no, indeed, for if they were, the poor fine women would be all used like wives, and no more minded than the business of the nation." So with Lord Foppington, who talks of "bombarding a woman's mind," and adds that "a fine woman, when she's married, makes as ridiculous a figure as a beaten general marching out of a garrison." So with "The Provoked Wife," written with the most extraordinary vigour and spirit,—every line of the dialogue, character. We may pass to that wonderful clergyman's play, "The Suspicious Husband," which Johnson seems to have considered as excelled by no comedy of the century, and to which he placed Goldsmith's play equal. The brightness, gaiety, and spirit were admirable; and it is surprising no manager has thought of reviving it. Its pendant,—and quite as good,—is "The Clandestine Marriage," which may be called Garrick's, and was all but written by Colman to his dictation. This, too, would repay revival; it would be as fresh as the morning, inspiriting as mountain air; and two newer and more spirited characters than Lord Ogleby and Mrs. Heidleberg could not be conceived. Colman's own "Jealous Wife," in which Garrick also had a share, is excellent. Macklin's "Man of the World," with Sir Pertinnax, is familiar to our generation. What a store of characters and humour in all Foote's pieces, which run off as boisterously as the fun of a lively rattling Frenchman at a supper-party! What a variety! what "fun!" what pleasant reading even! We have Goldsmith's two unique comedies, alas! only two; Sheridan's "School for Scandal" and his "Rivals:" Cumberland and Mrs. Sheridan, Mrs. Cowley and Mrs. Centlivre, General Burgoyne and Arthur Murphy, with his capital "Way to Keep Him," "All in the Wrong," "Know your Own Mind," and "The Upholsterer." But if these pieces are so good and substantial, if they are really fine works, it must be recollected that the writing of a play was then a different thing from what it is now. Any one who turns over Garrick's vast correspondence will see what a serious and important business the writing of a play was. Author, manager, and actors had all to be considered and consulted. Whole acts were condemned and thrown out. Scenes were re-written and new situations contrived. The preparation was often spread over years. And

what is a most important proof of the character of the composition, its real value to the author was from the sale of the copyright,—the piece being written to be read as well as to be seen. Goldsmith and other writers received large sums from this source. Even the smaller fry fell into the tone of the good models before them, and got up a showy dash and spirit and wit that was respectable. How few have heard of Mrs. Griffith, and yet she wrote a very spirited comedy. As I have said, these were the days when we could amuse ourselves at the play-house. There we were diverted with the strange side of human nature—those turns and crannies of the human heart, the oddities of our species, which it is not our luck to fall in with, or we have not time to look for or think about, which skilled men put before us.

Mr. Thackeray has somewhere a pleasant burst of gratitude to Fielding and such writers, whose Amelia and Tom Jones, and Parson Adams and Uncle Toby, are as real to him, or at least as well known to him, as Bayard, or Richard I., or any other figure of history. They have been as much living characters;—they are as historical to us as persons who have lived and died. But on the same principle, Mr. Hardcastle and Lady Teazle, Sir John Falstaff and the other figures of the stage, have a better vitality; for we seem to see them in the flesh and blood, with the voice and bearing, with their humours and weaknesses, with their dress and gestures.

Now that we have finished with this rather dismal dramatic prospect, it may be asked, what is recommended? Is there no remedy? Can nothing be done? It is only to be answered that the reform must come, if it come at all, gradually. The fault is to be distributed among the critics, writers, players, manager, and audience, and all are more or less accountable. Every one sees now the helplessness of the public in the matter of criticism. They have grown to be so spoon-fed, to rely so much in matters of judgment on their daily and weekly guides, that they have become incapable of judging for themselves. This naturally has thrown an enormous power into the hands of those who guide them, which in their turn may be directed by other influences, not altogether intellectual. The audience should exercise a little of its old independence,—learn to be pleased or displeased, without being told when or why. Advertisement now takes the place of dramatic merit, as it does in the case of merchandise; and a piece well advertised by criticism and the like means, is now a true success. Managers should have the courage to go back by degrees and bring out pieces of the good old sort, and actors should study such pieces. That such would soon "pay" there can be no doubt. There should be some classification of theatres, and burlesques and "sensation" things confined to proper houses of their own. And very soon we might look for the return of those "palmy days of the drama" which seem to belong to the mythology, and find ourselves enjoying a hearty laugh and rich entertainment at our theatres. P. F.

THE MILITARY ARMAMENTS OF THE FIVE GREAT POWERS.

There was no more striking feature in the Paris Exhibition this year than the display in every department of material of war. From the outermost limits of the enceinte to the very inmost circle, implements of destruction were to be found. Side by side with the most delicate fabrics of the loom, or the machines that belong essentially to the arts of peace, might be seen the grim muzzle of a cannon, or the little less deadly breech-loading rifle. The circle of the "useful arts" teemed with guns and projectiles; portable arms were classed with "clothing." The greatest steel manufacturer in Europe showed, as his chief triumph, a monster piece of ordnance; and the iron workers of every country seemed with one accord to have converted their ploughshares into swords. To those who remember the first Exhibition in 1851, where weapons of war scarcely held a place, the contrast was almost startling. And if we look deeper than the mere surface, and consider what is the real significance of this curious outward change, we find all the great nations of Europe vying with each other in the improvement of the arts of destruction, and their rulers striving to turn whole generations of men into trained soldiers. All this can have but one meaning; this, namely, there is no trust between state and state, and in an age of so-called civilisation, might, instead of right, is daily becoming more and more the law of international society.

In this peculiar condition of affairs, the study of the armaments of foreign powers becomes of vital importance to every Government; and accordingly each has done its best to ascertain all about its neighbour's military arrangements, while endeavouring, more or less carefully, to conceal its own. In this country we made a few feeble attempts to conceal our earlier improvements, and the gun factories were at one time closed even against officers of artillery, when the Armstrong guns were being made. But the useless effort was soon abandoned; and now we make little or no secret of our improvements in manufacture. Our experiments are thrown open to the public; foreign officers are afforded every facility for examining our arsenals and workshops; and a healthy criticism of our military administration is constantly going on in Parliament and the press. France keeps a tighter hold over her journalists, and strives to conceal all details from the eyes of the curious, keeping even the officers of the

French army in many respects in the most complete ignorance. But in these days secrecy can hardly exist. In the words of one of the ablest of French writers, himself a soldier, who has lately criticised with admirable justice the proposed scheme for reorganisation of the French army;—in these days, when nations live, as they now do, in the midst of perpetual interchange of communication and of unlimited public information, mystery in regard to new inventions and improvements is both useless and impossible. It is the law of the age that we either know to-day, or shall know to-morrow; and those armies will be the best advised that, in a perfectly open manner, submit their ways and means to the freest discussion, comparing them with those of other nations, which it is their bounden duty to study with the utmost care.

Perhaps there could be no more forcible example of the two systems—frankness and concealment—than that afforded by Prussia and Austria during the late campaign in Germany. While every facility was afforded by the Prussians to the foreign officers who accompanied them to the front for studying not only the nature of their armament, organisation, and administration, but even the disposition of the troops and the plans of the campaign, the Austrians pursued the "ostrich system," and studiously withheld every particle of information. It is matter now almost of certainty that the Prussians knew better than any officers of the Austrian army, except perhaps the immediate head-quarter staff, the strength, condition, and position of the Austrian troops. When the dire disaster of Kœnigratz overtook him, Benedek withdrew his rigorous orders on the subject of secrecy; and to judge by what one sees at Paris, there is now the most remarkable frankness in regard to the Austrian military armaments, —a frankness contrasting with the reserve of France. The Prussian and Russian Governments exhibit little or no material of war; but Krupp, the great steel manufacturer of Essen, may be taken as the expositor of their systems of artillery; and ample information concerning their armaments has been at one time or other collected from different sources. We have now military attachés at the Courts of the great Powers; but they seem, as a rule, to be kept a good deal in the dark, being looked upon, perhaps, somewhat in the light of professional spies; and the information which they send home is always kept so private by the authorities as not to be publicly available. Other sources of information, however, exist,—such as the published accounts of the annual tours made by artillery officers on the Continent. This year, France has been their field; last year, Russia; and the preceding year, Austria and Prussia. From one or another of these reports, and from further information which it is not necessary to particularise, we propose to place before our readers a slight sketch and comparison of the armaments of the five great Powers.

And first, as regards the artillery, the importance of which as a principal arm is now universally acknowledged,—the lead in the

introduction of rifled field-guns was taken by France. The present Emperor is himself an artillerist of no mean order. He has written the best history of artillery that has yet seen the light; but, while examining the past, he looked forward, and saw that changes were needed. First, he introduced a powerful smooth-bored shell-gun, known as the Napoleon gun, throwing a 12-pound projectile, which superseded the mixed batteries of guns and howitzers formerly employed, thus simplifying the equipments, and obtaining uniformity in every gun in the field. At this time, however, the advantages to be derived from the employment of elongated bullets with rifled fire-arms had not become fully apparent. The "carabine à tige," invented by Colonel Thouvenin, with the elongated bullet of M. Delvigne, were given to the French army, in Africa, as early as 1846; but there were so many drawbacks connected with this system, such as the liability of the pillar to breakage, and the fatigue to the soldier in ramming down, that rifled arms did not seem destined to play any great part in war. But when, by the invention of M. Minié, the expansion of the bullet into the grooves of the bore had no longer to be effected by the sheer muscular force of the soldier, exerted through the ram-rod, but was performed with absolute certainty by the action of the gas from the powder on the cup at the base of the bullet, then the great advantages of accuracy and long range became evident. At first the rifle was restricted to certain special regiments, and the old smooth-bore held its ground in the bulk of the army; but, at last, it gave way, and the whole of the troops were provided with long-range arms of precision. Then arose an outcry that the days of artillery were numbered. It was asserted that with rifles which would make accurate practice at a thousand yards, gun detachments would be picked off man by man; for the fire of smooth-bored field-artillery was not effective at very long ranges, and the guns, in order to do any execution, must come within reach of the long range arms of the infantry. But the principle which had gained such great things for the foot soldier might also surely be turned to the benefit of the artilleryman, and guns, like muskets, might be rifled, and discharge elongated projectiles. The first to seize this idea and utilise it was the Emperor of the French. With little delay he introduced rifled field-pieces into his army; and the bronze "canon de 4 rayé," introduced into the French service in 1858, played its part in the Italian campaign of 1859, and in the open ground overpowered the Austrian smooth-bored artillery. The French batteries engaged in this war were not all armed with these guns; but those that were gave immense advantage to the French at the battle of Solferino. At 2,500 yards they played with considerable effect on the village; at an almost equally long range they stopped an Austrian column from turning the Sardinian right. At one point, a battery of Austrian horse artillery was sent with some of Mensdorff's cavalry to cover the

retreat of an overmatched Austrian battery. An eye-witness relates that they had hardly got within 1,700 yards, when of six guns, five were dismounted. Another battery was sent up; in one minute from starting, three guns were dismounted, and a great number of horses killed. The effect of these rifled batteries would probably have been even greater, had not the fuses of the shells frequently failed, owing to their defective manufacture in the great hurry and pressure before the campaign.

Rifled artillery was now destined to become a part of the armament of every European power; but all set to work in different ways to obtain it. The French had every reason to be satisfied with what they had got, and they wisely resolved upon retaining the guns that had served them so well. The bronze muzzle-loading "canon de 4 rayé," rifled on the "système la Hitte," with six angular grooves, and firing projectiles with zinc buttons, is now, as it was in 1859, the recognised field-gun of the French service. For guns of position and siege guns, the Napoleon 12-pounder shell-gun and others have been rifled; and though they can hardly be considered first-class guns, being rather too light in proportion to calibre, and thus recoiling with too much force, they are good and serviceable.

Austria had learnt a lesson from her opponent. While the war was going on, she had striven to arm her gunners with copies of the very gun which her adversaries had used with such deadly effect against her. But the campaign was of short duration, and long before any number of these guns had been completed, the peace was concluded which cost her Lombardy. And now, by dint of hard study and careful experiment in the laboratory, an Austrian officer had, as it seemed, brought to great perfection a substance that was to supersede gunpowder, and give new superiority to artillery. Baron von Lenk had long been engaged in studying the manufacture of gun-cotton, invented some years before by Schönbein; and, abandoning the French system, the Viennese military authorities commenced to arm their batteries with guns specially designed by Lenk for this substance. But it soon appeared that there were terrible drawbacks to this fair-seeming innovation, and that more study and more experiment would be required before it could be safely substituted for the long-tried powder, all too hastily discarded. So Austria again changed her system, and introduced the pattern of field-gun now employed by her, and which did its work right well in the war of last summer. It is very similar to the system introduced by Lenk for gun-cotton, but varies in form so as to suit the altered cartridge. Like France, Austria uses bronze for her field-guns; but they are rifled on a peculiar method, adopted by this nation alone. Circular eccentric grooves are cut in the bore, and the projectiles, coated with a mixture of tin and zinc, have ribs along their surface corresponding in form to the grooves cut in the gun. Like France, too, Austria

employs muzzle-loading field-guns, and the same piece is used both by her horse artillery and field batteries, but drawn by a greater number of horses when required to move at the rapid pace of horse artillery. The bore of her field-gun is very little smaller than that of the French piece, and the same projectiles are used: shrapnel shells, designed to burst in front of a line of troops, when the shell opening gently, the bullets continue their onward course,—and common shells, intended to burst explosively among the enemy, and deal destruction by their splinters. Case shot, too, are carried with the guns, and used at short ranges, issuing as a shower of bullets from the mouth of the cannon.

While the French and Austrians have thus adhered to bronze muzzle-loaders, the Prussians, Russians, and ourselves have gone on quite a different principle for our field-artillery. We all had bronze muzzle-loading smooth-bores; but, instead of rifling them, we all seem to have arrived at the conclusion that bronze was too soft a metal to be really efficient for rifled guns, and to have sought elsewhere for a metal suited to our requirements. Theoretically we were right; practically we were wrong. That is to say, bronze will not last so long for rifled guns as iron or steel, as it will wear away by reason of its softness; but it will answer well enough for a reasonable length of time; and had we, for instance, in this country been content at starting with rifling our old guns, we might have sought at our leisure to find the very best among the systems which time, and the value of the prize to be competed for, would have been certain to produce. What we did in England was this:—penetrated by the idea that a breech-loading system was better than any known muzzle-loading plan, seeing on the horizon the signs of a storm brewing on the Continent, knowing the necessity of having rifled guns, and that at once, we accepted in its entirety the only complete system of artillery offered: breech-loading guns built up in such a manner as to ensure extreme strength, projectiles possessing immense superiority over any others at that time known, at all events in this country, and fuses suited to this peculiar system of breech-loading rifled gun, in which the old fuses were no longer available, for the flame that used to ignite could no longer reach them. The very complication of the breech-loading system of the guns and of the shell, and the mechanism of the fuse, approaching to the delicacy of an astronomical instrument, had a charm that beguiled, for it was considered that war was no longer to be rough and ready work, but guided and aided in every step by the lamp of physical science. And so, when Mr. Armstrong brought forward his beautiful complete system of artillery,—for beautiful it is, if too complicated in its details,—he was received with open arms. The old establishments in the Arsenal at Woolwich for casting guns were broken up, and new buildings sprung up on all sides for the construction of the Armstrong built-up guns, with their coiled tubes of bar iron, and forged breech-pieces made from solid slabs. That

system we still retain, almost exactly as we first accepted it. The guns have had little or no alteration; steel has taken the place of coiled iron for the inner tube; wrought iron has taken the place of steel for the vent-piece. The projectile, the wonderfully ingenious segment shell, by many considered the best projectile existing for field service, still holds its own. Available as solid shot, if need be, as common shell, or in some measure as shrapnel shell and case, it has peculiar merits of its own. But like every other Jack-of-all-trades, it is master of none. It is not as efficient as any one of the projectiles named; so case shot have been introduced, invented by Lieutenant Reeves, and Colonel Boxer's shrapnel is trying hard to push the segment shell altogether out of the limber-box. It has not yet succeeded, and meanwhile Armstrong's original fuses, modified repeatedly by other inventors, still afford the necessary aid to the projectile that is needed to produce its deadly effect.

This Armstrong gun of ours was tried in March, 1865, in comparison with the French field-gun, and it was found that our 12-pounder, the weapon of our field-batteries, exceeded considerably, while our 9-pounder, the weapon of the horse artillery, equalled the French gun both in range and in accuracy. As the French gun makes good practice at 3,000 mètres, we need not complain of the gun which we have got. It is true that a committee of superior artillery officers which lately assembled pronounced an opinion in favour of muzzle-loaders over breech-loaders, on the ground of their greater simplicity of construction, and freedom from liability to derangement; and we should probably be better off if we had a first-rate muzzle-loader, such as we now understand how to produce; but the gun as it stands did good service in very rough work in China and New Zealand, and stood well enough, while in range and accuracy it is all that can be desired. It was wise, then, of the Duke of Cambridge to express his opinion, as he has done, that the trifling advantage that would occur on a change would be more than balanced by the enormous expense to be incurred by a sudden transformation, or the complication of stores and drill that would arise from a gradual replacing of the guns. And so we shall for the present, at all events, stick to what we have got. The Commander-in-Chief gave another reason for deprecating a change, namely, that other great powers were armed and arming with breech-loaders.

This is the case with both Prussia and Russia. Both have adopted breech-loading field-guns, with projectiles coated with lead, as we have; but whereas our guns are built up of wrought iron, or of steel cased in wrought iron, they have both trusted entirely to steel alone. Russia seems to have followed the lead of her western neighbour; and Prussia's decision to pin her faith to steel is probably due to the fact of her possessing at Essen, in her Rhenish provinces, the greatest steel works in the world, those of Herr Krupp. This establishment,

which has existed for forty years, has gradually been developed and increased, so that each year from its origin has seen it extended by an addition of a sixth to a third of its former size. The works now cover some 450 English acres, of which 200 are under roof. Eight thousand men are employed at the works, and 2,000 more at Herr Krupp's coal mines near Essen, his furnaces on the Rhine, or his iron pits on the Rhine and in Nassau. The value of the yearly production of the works is upwards of a million and a half English pounds sterling. Herr Krupp's reputation for the management of cast steel is unrivalled; and he has overcome, in the most extraordinary manner, the difficulties attending the manufacture of very large ingots of steel. To him the Prussians have gone for the material of all the field-guns in their service; to him Russia has had recourse. Both nations employ the same field-gun, that known as the 4-pounder because the weight of its spherical shot would be 4 pounds; the actual weight of its shell is about 9 pounds, the same as that of our horse artillery gun. The Prussians have a steel 6-pounder, throwing a shot of about 14 pounds' weight, for their gun of position, and both they and the Russians have rifled their bronze 12-pounders for the same purpose, which, like the French gun, would throw 25-pound projectiles. We, in England, have 20-pounder batteries of position, and we should employ 40-pounders wherever the country would permit of their movement.

Each of these field-guns of Krupp's is made from one solid ingot of cast steel, drawn out and forged under the hammer, and then bored, turned, and rifled by the Prussian Government at the gun-factories at Spandau, near Berlin, or by the Russians at the arsenal of St. Petersburg. As regards the method of closing the breech, the Prussians have a thousand guns on the well-known Wahrendorff system; but that which has been their service construction, and which was employed in the Bohemian campaign, is known as Krainer's double-wedge system. It has not been found thoroughly satisfactory, and is now about to give place to a patent system of Krupp's, exhibited in a 4-pounder gun at Paris this year, and combining simplicity and strength. The Russians have adopted this system definitively, preventing all escape of gas by the use of the Broadwell ring, which acts like the Bramah ring in a hydrostatic press. They have also wisely resolved no longer to put their trust in a foreign manufactory alone for material for ordnance, and have started steel works about four miles from St. Petersburg, known as the Aboukhoff works. It will go hard with them, however, to equal Krupp's skill in the management of this metal.

Our guns do not appear to have been actually tried in competition with the Prussian steel gun. As regards range and accuracy, there would probably be little to choose. We should probably have the best of it, but then our guns are heavier, which is a decided drawback. As for material, steel is uncertain; some of Krupp's small guns, even,

have burst; and when steel does burst it flies into destructive pieces; whereas our wrought iron will rend, but not fly. Shrapnel, shell, and case are the projectiles of both Prussian and Russian field-artillery; but the Prussians spoilt the effect of their shrapnel in the late war by using them with percussion instead of time fuses. The real truth of the matter is that there is very little choice between the field-artillery of the five Powers. Their advantages and their drawbacks balance each other, and it will be a question of officers and men, more than of guns.

While France, as we have seen, took the lead in the adoption of rifled field-guns, Prussia was the first to recognise the value of breech-loading small-arms for infantry. There is no more strange chapter in the history of military armaments than that which relates the extraordinary apathy about, nay more, the aversion to the system of breech-loading arms for infantry that for long pervaded the councils of all the other European Powers. Prussia was looked upon as a monomaniac when she supplanted all her old muzzle-loading arms by the breech-loading rifle designed for cartridges carrying their own ignition, the famous Zund-nadel-gewehr, the needle-gun, which has now been as much over-praised as formerly it was decried. Strange as it may now seem, Prussia was then considered so little likely to be a troublesome neighbour, and her power was so much underrated, that it was considered little matter how she was armed, so long as there was no great pre-eminence shown by any one of the other Powers. But the needle-gun was actually tried and condemned, at all events by France and England. The arguments which carried the day in our own country may be looked upon as a fair specimen of those that prevailed elsewhere. In the first place our authorities were fully imbued with the idea that it was highly dangerous to employ cartridges containing their own principle of ignition, and in which consequently detonating composition must be contained together with gunpowder. In the next place rapidity of fire, the chief point of superiority of a breech-loader, was not only not recognised as an advantage, but was positively set down against breech-loaders as one of their disadvantages. It was argued that it is, even with muzzle-loading arms, a difficulty to make a soldier reserve his fire, and that if a weapon were put into his hands which he could fire with great rapidity, he would expend all his ammunition before the crisis of the action arrived. Then the needle-gun was examined through the false medium of these notions. It was pronounced unsatisfactory, not on the grounds on which we now pass it over, as being too slow and clumsy, but as being too rapid an arm to trust in the hands of any but veteran soldiers, and as involving great danger in the storage and transport of its cartridges. But Prussia in this, as in many another point of her military system, was, unlike her neighbour, wise before the event. She trusted to the confidence that would be given to her

troops by the knowledge that they could fire three or four times to the one shot of the enemy, and that this would induce them to reserve their fire till the range was such that the superior rapidity could tell with certainty; and she knew by experiment what we contented ourselves with contradicting without a trial, that there was little or no danger in the employment of self-igniting cartridges. And so, while we held to our muzzle-loaders, as did the French and the other great Powers, she adopted for her troops of all arms the needle-gun which Herr Dreyfus had invented.

It is not, however, perfectly true to say that we had not introduced breech-loaders until quite recently. Their superiority as an arm for cavalry had been recognised, even in this country, for many years; and in order to abolish the difficulties attending the loading a muzzle-loading arm on horseback, we armed our cavalry with breech-loading carbines more than ten years ago. The carbines known as Sharp's, Green's, Terry's, and Westley Richards' were experimentally issued, the last being a thoroughly good specimen of the capping breech-loader. But with a capping arm the greatest advantages of a breech-loader are lost. With a rifle where the cartridge carries its own ignition less time is occupied; there is no fumbling for the cap with cold or wet fingers, the piece can be loaded with the least possible exposure of the body, and there never is a "miss fire" from the powder getting wet, or the nipple being choked. Still, as we have shown, these advantages were supposed to be over-balanced by the imaginary faults we have named; and it was not till the Prussian needle-gun was actually tried, and not found wanting, in the Danish war of 1864, that we woke up to the belief that the other side of the question might, after all, possibly be the right one.

Then a committee was appointed, which recommended the arming of all our troops with breech-loaders, signing its report to this effect on the 11th July, 1864. A single instance of what the needle-gun effected in the Danish war will be sufficient to show what grounds we had for this decision. We extract this from the report of the professional tour of artillery officers in 1865. At Lundby, in Jutland, a detachment of 100 Prussian infantry, commanded by a Captain Schlotterbach, was attacked by two companies of Danish infantry, supported by half a squadron of cavalry. The Prussian commander reserved his fire until his enemy was about 250 paces distant, when he commenced "quick firing," and in a very short space of time inflicted a loss on the Danes of two officers and ninety-five men killed and wounded, the casualties among his own party being only two wounded men! The attack was, of course, repulsed.

To the credit of England, it may be said that she was the first to appreciate at its true value the lesson of the Danish war. The needle-gun, though as a breech-loader with self-ignition cartridges far superior to any muzzle-loading small-arm, was wisely set aside as

too complicated and unwieldy to be adopted by us; and, very sensibly, it was resolved to try whether our immense and costly store of Enfield rifles could not be converted into breech-loaders on some better system. Out of the competition which was invited by the Government grew the "Snider converted Enfield," which is, for the present, the arm of the British infantry. Experiments made at home had demonstrated, beyond the possibility of doubt, that cartridges carrying their own ignition could be made not only as safe, but infinitely safer, than the old pattern for muzzle-loading arms. In mercy to our readers, we will spare them the tedious details of the squabbles over the rifle itself, and the Boxer cartridge, and only remind them, with a sigh of regret, that while a paper war was being carried on, the inventor himself, Mr. Snider, died in the grip of poverty and debt—a lasting disgrace to our country, let what special pleading there may be used to excuse the fact. This is the weapon with which all our troops at home and in America are armed, and with which all the rest will soon be supplied. Let us compare it briefly with the Prussian needle-gun. It has a cartridge impervious to wet and fire-proof, while no amount of rough usage is likely to injure it so as to render it useless. The action of the arm is very simple; there is a complete freedom from complication of mechanism, and the discharge is very rapid. Eighteen shots and more have been fired in a minute. The needle-gun has a paper cartridge, not so strong or water-proof. It is heavy, complicated in its mechanism, and liable to injury by the breaking of the needle which pierces the cartridge to ignite the fulminate. And its rate of fire is half, or less than half, that of the Snider rifle. But, wisely, we are not satisfied with this arm, if a better can be obtained; and, accordingly, a competition is now going on for the future arm of the British infantry. Out of more than a hundred rifles sent in to compete, nine have been selected, and in this month of November they will be subjected to further trial on a large scale. It is impossible to predict which of these will be chosen, but, whichever it be, it will be even better than what we have now got.

The conversion of the Enfield rifle upon the Snider system had been actually decided upon in England one month before the battle of Kœnigratz. It was not till after the Bohemian war that the other Powers became convinced of the immediate necessity for a change in their armament. The Danish war had taught Austria no such lesson as it had taught us; or, if she had seen the value of the new weapon, she shrank, in the bankrupt state of her exchequer, from the expense attending so great a change. And so she still was halting between two opinions, and, to use the favourite phrase of our own War Department, "making further experiments," when the wily Prussian Minister seized the opportunity, and she was dragged into war with a disadvantage in her infantry armament of at least three to one. Then it was that Benedek tried to give the confidence to his troops that they should

have had by this time from another source, had the lesson of the Danish war only been properly accepted. "The enemy," he said, "have for some time vaunted the excellence of their firearms, but, soldiers, I do not think that will be of much avail to them. We will give them no time, but will attack them with the bayonet and with crossed muskets." Alas, poor Austria! why had she not been wise in time? Now her arsenals are alive. The muzzle-loading arms are being converted on the Wänzl system, exhibited by Würzer in the Paris Exhibition. The chamber is closed by a solid block, which hinges in front and throws over along the barrel, like the well-known Mont Storm system; but the arrangement is clumsy, and unnecessarily complicated with springs, always an element of weakness. The arm which she has chosen for the future is on Wörndl's system, a simple and quick small bore. But it will be long before she will have her troops all armed, for she dallied too long with other systems, trying, amongst others, two thousand of Remington's arms.

Neither the Austrian conversion nor the new arm have anything in common with the needle-gun as far as the mechanism is concerned, though the new arm is, like the needle-gun, a small bore. But France has unwisely allowed herself to be bitten with the needle system, and the Chassepot rifle, the new arm chosen for her troops, is but a modified and improved Prussian needle-gun. It is rather simpler than its parent, but has many faults. It has far too many springs, and, like the needle-gun, requires a paper cartridge not waterproof. Moreover the escape of gas is checked by the close fitting of a piece of india-rubber, and this must wear out of form far sooner than metal. Nor is the shooting of the Chassepot to be compared with our Snider converted Enfield. The French troops themselves are dissatisfied with the arm, and many prefer the old arm, which, like our own, is being converted as rapidly as possible on the Snider system, to be used with Boxer's cartridge. All the experiments instituted in this country point conclusively to the fact that the needle system cannot be considered desirable for military purposes. Comparing, then, the French arms with others, their conversion is the same as ours, and rather superior to Austria's; while their new arm is decidedly inferior to the Austrian Wörndl gun, and is sure to be left behind by any of the systems which we elect for our new weapon; but it is decidedly superior to the Prussian needle-gun, which there seems no inclination on the part of that Government to abandon. Without doubt the confidence which the Prussian army has gained in this weapon in the war of last year is worth much; and it is probably with a view to frightening his future antagonists, and giving confidence to his own troops, that the Emperor of the French is constructing these mysterious pieces, to be worked by turning a handle, which it is said can keep up a continuous shower of rifle bullets, at the rate of sixty a minute, and which, if rumour speaks truly, are to be supplied to the infantry, at the rate of two

per battalion. These are probably constructed somewhat on the plan of the American Gatling gun; for of course the story about the projectiles being thrown by centrifugal force is untrue. The secret has as yet been very well kept. It is said at Paris that the different parts are made at different factories; and that only a select few know their mutual application. Stories are afloat of Prussian officers disguised as workmen hovering about the practice ground at daybreak, when the experiments are carried on. To our mind such studious concealment argues imperfection rather than success, and these wonderfully mysterious weapons of which the world has so often heard seldom come to much in the end.

Russia is behindhand in the race for breech-loading small-arms. She is about to convert her muzzle-loaders on the Terry system, a capping arm, long since tried for cavalry carbines, and discarded, in our service; but she delays even over this. It is asserted, however, that she intends to adopt a magazine rifle, probably Laidley's, as her new weapon. If so, she will, in our opinion, take a step to which sooner or later we shall all have to come. When once the principle is thoroughly and universally recognised that the soldier is to be educated and trained up to the character of his weapon, and not that the weapon is to be kept down to suit the comprehension of the dullest and most ignorant soldier in the ranks, then the magazine rifle must come into universal use. These rifles, of which Spencer's is the best known, having been employed to a considerable extent in the American war, contain a reservoir of cartridges in the stock, from whence, by the action of a handle, six or seven, or whatever number the reservoir will hold, can be pumped up with the utmost rapidity, and discharged in succession almost instantaneously. For the critical moment, to meet a charge of cavalry, or in advancing against the enemy's line at close quarters, such a fire will be deadly in its effect; and if it be urged that the temptation to the soldier to fire away his ammunition too rapidly will be too great, we reply that he must be trained to be cool, as the Prussian soldiers are, and not to fire till he is bid so to do. The magazine need not be called upon; the arm can be used as an ordinary breech-loader for all ordinary purposes; and the soldier must be trained so to use it. He must learn to withhold the contents of his magazine till the moment when all depends on the fire that can be given in a few seconds.

Such is, in brief, a sketch of the field armaments of the five Powers. To enter on the question of heavy guns and fortresses would take more space than can be here afforded, and moreover is a question of far less moment. It is in the field that armies will now settle the differences of nations, and not behind stone or iron walls. Fortresses will still have their uses, but the Bohemian campaign has shown how the policy commenced by Napoleon of masking and leaving them behind is that most in accordance with the spirit of modern warfare.

Naval armaments form, of course, an entirely separate question. The sketch which we have given will enable a fair comparison to be made of the weapons that will be used in the event of any European war taking place before long. If, as we believe, the main issue of battles will in future, as hitherto, be decided by infantry, then we predict that the nation which shall first perfect and utilise the idea of the magazine rifle will reap the same advantage in that conflict that the Prussians gained last year by their needle-gun. But it is not by the rifle alone that success can be attained. Numbers being equal,—and it is probable that the four great continental Powers could each put into the field armies practically equal, for all would be as large as could be handled or moved to advantage,—numbers being equal, the tactics best adapted to the improvements in arms will win the day, and the great aim of tactics must now be rapidity of movement. To this end the old idea which converted the soldier into a mere machine must be abandoned. Instead of being taught that he is not to think but only to obey, he must learn to think, that the shortest way may always be followed. Instead of roundabout manœuvres, invented that every man may always hold the same place in the ranks, simpler movements must be adopted. Changes of front and flank or rear movements must be performed by the very methods which are now considered disgraceful as "clubbing" the troops, but the men must be taught not to lose their heads when they are clubbed. Prussia has taken the initiative in this, as she did in the present system in the days of Frederick. France is following in her footsteps. The others must follow sooner or later. Let us be wise and learn the lesson at once. Small as the contingent is which we can ever throw to either side, bearing only such a proportion to any other great Power's army as did the Saxon army to the Austrian or Prussian in Bohemia, it should be the best in the world. But we labour under fearful disadvantages. Other nations take the flower of the manhood of the country for their armies, and the highest and the lowest of their sons fight side by side in the ranks. Too independent to accept compulsory personal service even for our country, we yet are unwilling to pay the cost of our exemption, and instead of making the army the best of all professions, so as to attract men of intelligence and ability into its ranks, we seek only for how small a sum it is possible to get men of any stamp, and we lower our bidding till we can just fill our army with the dregs of our cities, and only raise the offer when even they cannot be drawn, even by the lies of a recruiting sergeant, into the ranks. While this continues, it is well for England that she is girt with the sea, and it is by her naval armaments that she must seek to keep up her reputation.

A SHEFFIELD WORKMAN'S WEEK EXCURSION TO PARIS AND BACK FOR SEVENTY SHILLINGS.

I HAD given up the thought of going to the Paris Exhibition, and ceased to care about it. For in the early spring death came to my home and took our only one,—a daughter; and it had been a promise to her that, all being well, we would go to Paris and the Exhibition this year, and then she would have the opportunity to be cicerone on the journey, and show that the French learned at school had not been in vain. A short illness, not thought dangerous, and the grave closed over the brightness and life of our home, and "hushed the music that gladdened us all day long." So that the sight of "Paris" on a poster gave a pang and an unneeded stimulus to the sensitive memory of sorrow. For awhile I avoided reading them at all.

One night in August, passing along the street, I was struck with the words "Workmen," and in smaller letters, "to Paris and back, 34s." In a conference at home that night between self and wife, that power argued, first, that as the care of an aged sick relative,—which she would not delegate,—would keep her at home, I should have to go to see Uncle Gould in London, the fare by excursion being 14s.; second, that being a workman, it was of first importance that I should be up with the times, and that if I went to the Paris Exhibition and examined only my own trade, it would be worth the additional 20s. and the time; and, thirdly, that the change of air and scene, a strange country and new sights, would occupy the mind, if it did not soothe the sorrows of bereavement. The only condition was that I should write home every day. The power's reasoning prevailed, as it has done before and will do again, the world over, both for good and for evil.

It being passed that I should go, and the supplies voted, I began to think to what and where I was going. My notions of Paris were common to many. It was the place where Fashion resides; where crinoline was invented; where wine is the common drink, and grapes grow in the open air; where frogs and snails are eaten, and said to be good; where Sunday is still a day of pleasure for the most part, but becoming more reverently observed; where revolution is indigenous, and may start up with more than mushroom rapidity above ground at any time; where suicides abound,—a man threw himself from one of the columns while I was there; where life is lightly esteemed; where one man rules, and drives, and leads a people, who

assume, at times dreadfully, to be especially able to rule themselves; where a newspaper cannot say what it would; where a political meeting cannot be held. These were my not very prepossessing notions of Paris.

Having certain sanction and sympathies, I struck work; not for price, though if that was ten per cent. more on returns, why, I'd have it. Nor to drive out a knobstick; more steady earnest industry might do that as soon as anything. But it was a strike nevertheless. An annual strike to be recommended whenever possible. One that is not a loss to both master and workman, but a gain to both. I struck work on this occasion to see Paris and the Exhibition.

Late in August I presented my certificate and took a thirty-four-shilling workman's ticket to Paris and back, with option of breaking the journey at London, Dover, Calais, or Amiens; and after a quick journey to Dover, and across to Calais, I stood on a foreign shore,—in France,—not knowing scarcely a word of the language. I soon found that whatever the home experience might be, the "unruly member" was for once harmless, and almost useless. I had certainly a tongue in my head, but it did not seem the right sort for here. It was indeed a feeling of helplessness and loneliness, for talk was much more embarrassing than silence. I do not think the feeling an unwholesome one, though not at all pleasant at the time. Very likely many a youngster will feel it in having the "extra" paid, and French added to his school tasks.

With temporary loss of speech perhaps one's eyes open a little wider. By pantomime and decimal coinage I managed to ascertain the price of refreshment before the train moved off towards Boulogne. I had taken the precaution of a late but substantial tea at Dover, not too near sailing time. I was thus enabled to enjoy the sail, and to go through the night without troubling the buffets.

The company in the carriage were anything but cast down. Some could speak a little, and two French soldiers were very brave in their efforts to understand and be understood. They very quietly took the "chaff" of two youths, who pretended to them that they had a better acquaintance with French than they possessed. The small hours of the night crept on, and with them a disturbed sleep, most effectually broken at Montreuil by a barrel-organ and daylight. The music almost drove the Frenchmen into ecstasies. The buffet stations where the train stopped were sources of considerable amusement. People rushed into the rooms and seized what they could get, and when the reckoning came it often did not suit. One man came back complaining that he had been charged fifteen-pence for a cup of coffee, and then the waiter made him understand he wanted something for himself. The man was sorely vexed, and told the waiter to go to the ——, in the very plainest English,

It was not four o'clock, and yet many were at work in the

fields. If there are any early worms to pick in this country, the French agricultural labourer should be the bird to pick them. It is to be seen by the different character of the villages and farm-buildings, with here and there a rounded kind of castle-looking building, that you are in another country. The country houses have a more liberal provision for daylight, and not such long roofs. There were many homesteads and farm-buildings either deserted or in a most deplorable condition. There is a very large crucifix painted white on the left of the railway by a roadside. It was quite new to most of us. There is an absence of fencing to the fields, of either walls or hedges, that gives a very open appearance to the country, which is on the whole very interesting. A valley on both sides of the line a little beyond Creil is worthy of notice.

It was difficult to believe, as the train passed on, that it was Sunday morning, so quiet and peaceful at home. There was mowing and shearing, waggons laden with corn and timber, barges loading with stone, quarrymen working, and builders and bricklayers. In fact, it did not seem Sunday with anybody or anything.

If it did not on the road, it did not in Paris. The first sight outside the station was a very large placard on which was depicted the conventional devil, horns, tail, and hoofs, with the title of the "Good Devil." There may be doubt about the correctness of the likeness, but I have no doubt that it is the doing of that personage that the French workman has been cajoled out of his Sunday, and he at any rate has no reason to call him the "Good Devil." The French workman may get his holidays;—no doubt he does; but this is one that should be taken, like meals, at regular and stated times. He gets them at any time, but not regular. I thought it was to be seen in his movements. He seems as if he had the whole three hundred and sixty-five days to do his work in, and no need to hurry; an easy-going manner that looks like apathy, and not a "go in" for six days, and then rest. This applies to both country and city workmen.

With a good map and guide no one need fear going to Paris, even though the "unruly member" be suspended for the time. The names of streets are fixed up very plentifully. A careful study of the map will dispense with the services of an interpreter for ordinary purposes. One's eyes do not need to translate.

Once out of the station, we come to the test of our capacity for travelling. No longer steam, flange wheels, and rails to keep us in the right track. After a little study on the spot, and a walk of more than two miles without asking the way, I came to Place de la Bastille, near to which I secured a bed at one shilling a night,—a clean, quiet bed, but the appointments of the room and place left something to be desired. I was recommended by a townsman, who was staying there, to put up with it. It was a safe place, and the time was short. I could but put up with it, as he said he had done. He had been a

week and had not found his way into bed. The beds were like a sofa without back, with very light covering, a square down mattress or pillow half the size of the bed, German fashion. My townsman had been lying on the top of the bed with the down mattress over him, and said, "I have managed pretty well, though I have no covering lower than the knees."

After a wash, writing home, and breakfast of coffee and bread and butter for sixpence, I set out along the Rue St. Antoine and looked in St. Paul's Church. It seems here a practice that while service may be going on in the middle of the church, and also in the small chapels round the sides, people not worshippers may walk in, sit down, or walk round and go out. It is very convenient for sight-seeing, but surely not reverent.

On past the Hôtel de Ville, Rue Rivoli, as far as the Louvre and Tuileries, crossed the Seine to Corps Législatif, back past the Morgue to Notre Dame, which I entered, and sat in one of the clumsy rush-bottomed chairs, that did not look at all ecclesiastical; which, in fact, corresponded with nothing I saw there except the wooden shoes of a few, and their blue blouses. The chairs were placed outside the body of the church in the "promenade," with the chapels round the side. I cannot describe the place, but would walk a long way to have another hour in it. History, art, and religion are here in marked and positive forms. I esteemed it a privilege to rest awhile here, and look and listen. He that runs may read here if he can spell ever so little. Few but have heard or read of Notre Dame, and few will enter the place without that reverent feeling and tread inspired by the long and important history of a nation's great sanctuaries. Yet some, as the crowd streamed in, had to be reminded to take off their hats. Not from irreverence perhaps. One of the most reverent men I ever knew,—he is dead now,—on entering York Minster for the first time, was overpowered by the size and grandeur of the place. He was told by an attendant to "take off your hat, please; this is a holy place." He took off his hat quickly, but replied, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof."

It was now noon. We went to a café where there were three "Yessirs" in white ties and napkins. We had each a flat fish and bread, and a mutton chop and fried potatoes, one plate of grapes, and one half-bottle of wine, and were charged two and sixpence for both of us.

I then went into the Louvre, which was crowded with people of many countries and costumes. Here is work, and pleasant work too, for months for the lover of pictures and decorations, of antique and modern art. In a hasty walk round I recognised many old friends, familiar by engravings only, but whose originals I looked upon with something of the freedom of an old acquaintance, and the gratification too. You walk in and out, and where you will, with a

freedom that rather surprised me, showing that these people have at least the liberty to walk in palaces.

My friend was anxious to see the Champ de Mars Park. We took a 'bus along the street of palaces and shop-arcades, Rue Rivoli, and down past the Tuileries Gardens. The Champ de Mars Park is simply a Sunday fair. Five or six very large roundabouts on the hillside, with the attraction of a barrel-organ, accompanied by two drums and a trumpet each. Punch and Judy very numerous. There was an acting show, a fat-woman show, some scores of small shops for wine and sweetmeats, shooting galleries, gambling-tables, and, in fact, a much greater number of caterers than attend the fair of a certain town with more than 200,000 inhabitants. It was a strange sight in the Boulevard de Rome, leading from the park, lined on each side with slates, men at work digging and building, a large balloon just up; and to think it was Sunday! I had the impression, before starting, things were better; I found them worse than I could have believed. By the Arc de l'Etoile, and down the Champs Elysées, the fashionable drive. Amongst the trees even here,—I thought it spoiled the appearance of the place sadly,—Punch and Judy and booths have a great stronghold. This road leads into the Place de la Concorde. My experience is not great, but it is the grandest square I ever looked upon. It is a place to be satisfied with seeing. Here, as elsewhere, inside and outside, it is clear somebody with the power is determined, as much as possible, to improve the whole place. Everywhere improvements are going on. If no more is done, the Emperor has left his mark on Paris. Across the square by the Zouave Guard into the Tuileries Gardens to Rue Rivoli. With the night travelling, and succession of sights during the day, I was weary and tired, and thought it best to make homewards. Not so H——, an old Sunday-school superintendent. He was determined to attend the English Independent chapel, near the Madeleine. Wearied and shocked with the desecration he saw everywhere, and because he was wearied, he wanted the more to go. He went, and as he entered the place the congregation were singing, "Jesu, lover of my soul, let me to Thy bosom fly." The old veteran was melted to tears for the whole of the service. He had, indeed, found a sanctuary. He said he felt then that "a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand."

Monday morning, up and out by a quarter-past six. I was not an early bird, though. There were plenty of shops open, and people in them. I had a basin of milk for three-halfpence, cool and refreshing. It is examined by the Government officers as it comes into the city, and is to be had at most of the cafés. I made for the markets,—halles centrales,—and had a two-hours' stroll among the contributions from the animal and vegetable kingdoms for the benefit of Paris. The markets of a great city, showing the productions of the country, and what can reach it, are an easy and accessible source of information.

Perhaps not such a bad point to study a people from, to look at what they eat! Here, all near, are markets for meat, offal, fish, fruit, vegetables, flowers, grapes, butter, and cheese. Green figs were plentiful, and many strange fruits, the produce of warmer climates. There was a strange fruit like a bunch of green kidney potatoes. Grapes and peaches were good and cheap, and melons seemed almost a drug. I looked in at the fish-market. Why should fish require so much noise to sell it? The din was equal to Billingsgate; I was glad to retreat. Flowers were in abundance, and bouquet-making studied and practised as an art of considerable service. If any come here with the idea that the French women are small-sized and very light, they will be undeceived both in the markets and elsewhere. There are in Paris, in a considerable proportion, some of the best-fed women in Europe, I should think. This is a fact of much moment. "Madame" would weigh as much as "Mrs. Bull." In the meat market there was a tolerable supply, and of fair quality. I saw no horse that I know of. They have a very liberal age for veal; it is not killed till in the transition state. Here I met a townsman who had just come through the offal market. He says, "Sheep-trotters are tied in bundles like firewood in London. Tripe is wrapped up and tied like a clean apron. Calves' heads, pigs' feet, &c.,—they must keep them in poultices, they are so white and soft-looking. But keep out; the smell is awful."

It was time for breakfast. I had coffee, bread and butter, a "bif-teck," and a small glass of brandy, for elevenpence. I don't say the steak was not horse; I don't know. But I know it was one of the best steaks I ever ate.

I went to the Exhibition by boat. To the right of the main entrance, past the refreshment-rooms, is the British workman's hall of meeting. Go there first thing to know where it is, and get a ticket of admission free. I felt much more at home after I had accidentally found it than with anything else I had met with. On the tables are catalogues, newspapers, writing materials, and water. And you may sit and hear your own language spoken. It is a boon; it is home for a few minutes.

The Exhibition is a good one, though perhaps we do not think it as good as ours. Those workmen who examine closely the French work of their own particular trade will find they are worthy, and in many instances successful, rivals. Many will be astonished at the work. Personally I have, after looking round the French department especially, a great respect for the ability of their workmen. They really can do some things better than us. Many a one, going quietly round, will receive a shock where he thought he was impregnable. Without personal encounter there will be many a confession of equality, and even of defeat, but that shall yet result in victory to come. I do not believe this stimulus will be lost on those who experience it. I

believe many will return with a determination to stir themselves to greater effort, and increase the distance where we have the superiority, and run again where there is doubt or defeat. In this peaceful but remunerative strife, the British workman will respond to the old war-cry, "England expects that every man will do his duty." Two days at the Exhibition will show that that duty is something more than resting on gained laurels.

In the higher kinds of gold and silver works the English are as good as the French, and the French as good as the English. This applies to the costly kinds that will pay for whatever amount of skill is expended upon them, our workmen in this department being able to hold their own with any. As to cheaper adaptations of electro-plate, within the reach of tradespeople, clerks, and managers, I did not, in my rapid survey, see anything like our own. Nothing like the goods to be seen in our shops, such as cruet-frames, cake-baskets, sugar-baskets, &c.; things that shall be tolerable-looking and yet within the reach of a large class; things which it must be admitted add considerably to the smartness of a household. Their cutlery is not to be despised in appearance, though for comfortable use it will be found far behind our own. Files they cut which for evenness of covering, over any surface, and perfect to the point, would be a lesson to many whom it is to be feared will never see them. Those engaged in the decorative branches will find many and very valuable hints in the French department. This is hardly necessary to say, as the decorative workman mostly pursues with the zeal of a sportsman the study of works having a bearing on his craft.

Out of the Exhibition on the side farthest from the river, to the Invalides, to know where it was, for visiting next morning. Past Corps Législatif to Rue Rivoli. "A shop-window feast" was part of my programme, and the late hours the shops keep open give ample opportunity for this recreation. Rue Rivoli and Palais Royal,—a square arcade consisting of a great number of shops,—will repay an inspection to those who would see the manufactures for every-day sale. We know that Exhibition things are not always of the usual sort. The great quantity of jewellers is surprising. The jewellery is exceedingly fanciful at times, but most I saw was good, chaste, and clear in design. Tiny watches, about the size of a shilling, or less, in bracelets, &c., are very clever and creditable workmanship. They must have purchasers, but may be looked upon as costly toys. The national trait of aptitude for light and fancy goods is here seen in a great variety of things. One would wonder who can be the purchasers of all the jewellery, even in the Palais Royal. Paris life is said to be gay; no doubt it is; but how is it with the shop-people? Open at seven in the morning to half-past nine at night, one would think somebody's times are not very gay. After half a bottle of wine I turned in well tired.

Tuesday morning I was out by half-past six. Past Imperial printing-

office to the flower market, a brilliant and imposing sight. The flowers are arranged in masses of colours, producing effects of form and combinations as pleasing as startling to those who have not witnessed the like before. One of my townsmen preferred the sight of the flower market to anything else he had seen. Here is art dealing with the most transient of raw materials. Either in a bouquet, or in the larger devices, they are very successful. It is worth ten minutes to see some of them,—from what slender materials they will produce a most presentable bouquet. Past the Post-Office,—it does not look to be the Post-Office for the Tuileries,—on to the Bank, Bourse, to Boulevard des Italiens, by Rue Richelieu to Rue Rivoli, my feeding quarters. I found a clean, cheap, and central café on the first day, and afterwards, when near enough, went there.

To the Invalides by ten o'clock. I prefer walking when the distance is not too far and the time too short. One can stay and look in at the old print-shops, turn over the portfolios at the door, and look in the window of the curiosity-shops on the Quai d'Orsay. It is a pleasant stroll down to the Invalides. I entered by the courtyard into the chapel, and saw the trophy flags of many nations that droop, still and battered, near the roof. From the chapel I passed to the tomb of Napoleon. What an old contest it is that men continue to fight with death and the grave! To make death look a triumph, and the grave like regal repose! This tomb is a great effort, but it is only a grand and imposing cover of the defeat. It is a grave, after all; the end of even that almost irresistible man, in a conflict in which guards could not save, and legions could not turn the tide of battle. He was defeated, but the defeat is splendidly covered by the tomb in the Invalides. The sad truth of the "Elegy" will come:—

> "The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
> With all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
> Await alike the inevitable hour,
> The path of glory leads but to the grave."

From the Invalides out by tomb entrance to Western Station, Place de Maine, for Versailles. It is very pleasant riding on the tops of the carriages, there is such a good view of the environs of the city on this side. Then the atmosphere is very clear. From one to five, a very good idea of the palace and grounds may be obtained. This, for a palace and grounds, is equal to Place de la Concorde as a city square. It is a place that time would be more necessary in making than money, though it would take a fabulous amount of money too. Avenues of trees worth a fortune are very numerous. It is a place so extensive and grand, that it looks as if Nature for once, to please some chosen one, had condescended to work to the conventional plans of man. The palace—! But what are palaces here? There are so many of them, and the splendours of first one and then another on the mind in a hasty run make it difficult to remember almost which is which.

Back to Western Station. On the right leads to the gardens and palace of the Luxembourg, to the Panthéon and by the Boulevard Sebastopol to Rue Rivoli. A stroll in the street at night was another intention. In a walk of three miles I saw hundreds,—at one place I made out two hundred,—of people sitting outside the cafés and wine-shops, at small round tables, drinking wine, seltz, beer, &c. They seemed very comfortable, however strange it might look to others. The wine does not seem of an intoxicating kind, though it might be efficacious in quantities. I know a glass of beer drunk in some places will either stupefy or intoxicate more than half a bottle of the ordinary wine drunk here. It seems just to lift the spirits, and has a tendency to make home and friends not quite so far off. For a quenching drink, syrups, wine, and seltz-water are very nice. The people were in very gay mood, but not boisterous; none of the ragged and dirty misery to be seen any time in our own gin-palaces. There was very good order, no quarrelling, but they seemed to be taking easy, quiet, and accustomed enjoyment. I did not see the homes of these people.

Wednesday. This was the day to return, so was off early with H—— to the fruit market, and invested five shillings in grapes and peaches, which I managed to get home in tolerable preservation the next day. It is part of the luxury of going away to bring something back. I had taken every handbill and card offered, and so I had a collection of odds and ends in veritable French. It is an event of considerable interest opening the bag or trunk after a journey. The children look on with impatient expectation. It was once the joyful right of one to have the key and open and rummage my bag to find the invariable book, box of dried fruits, &c.; but that is past now. My bag lay a day unopened this time. H—— never had any children, but he took two baskets of peaches and one of grapes. He said the trouble of taking them would be nothing to the pleasure he should have with his little nephews and nieces when he got home. He says it is one of the cheapest and most delightful luxuries that children are so soon made happy.

A look-out from the Arc de l'Etoile, and another peep into the Exhibition, was the programme for the last day. The first was done moderately early. It is a good and cheap panorama, and worth climbing the steps. I think a quarter of an hour on the top, with a map of the city, would be a good start in getting about the place. It is a real bird's-eye view. To the Exhibition I walked with increasing pleasure. I do not say that in my rapid survey I have "done" the Exhibition, but I saw most bearing on my own trade, and with the journey I am sure I had my money's worth. So much for the money I never had before. I do not remember any excursion for the distance at anything like the price.

The working classes, as far as I saw, possessed the negative virtues of being well conducted, and neat and tidily dressed. A very general expression of ingenuity in their countenances, rather than the stal-

wart force of much of our manufacturing people. Many men had blouses and trousers of blue cotton or calico, which is no doubt cool, easy, and cheap. The better class of workmen dressed as well as the same class in England. The dress of the women, for the most part, was very neat, and they looked well in it. It seemed bought for every-day wear. But who shall describe the female head-gear? Being a department conducted on special constructive principles only known to some, it is a subject not to be lightly approached at any time. There was every shape and pattern, from bare head to what appeared to be a small oblong table with the cloth laid. The intermediate designs and achievements I dare not attempt.

Nearly everything is different here,—houses, shops, signs, names, stalls, hawkers, rag-men, horses, carts, drays, carriages, dogs, and a thousand waifs and strays that will bubble up in days to come, that cannot fail to be a source of continued interest to the observer, who has not been in a foreign country before. I consider it a great event when I struck work to see Paris and the Exhibition.

To all who can afford seventy shillings,—and it cost no more,—and a week, I do not hesitate to say it will be an investment that will pay,—pay in "shop," in experience of another people, in an enlarged horizon, in remembrance, in real knowledge; for a month's reading could not convey as much as such a week;—in a general shaking up of the health that will leave you on the right end at last,—a shaking up that would be to many confined and hard-worked people a new lease of life.

Though I enjoyed the visit, I would not choose to be a Frenchman. So the sweetest music I heard was the quick uneasy thudding of the carriages over the sleepers, and the unadulterated English of my returning fellow-passengers,—mostly, I must say, grumbling and complaining as if they had just escaped from robbers. One man had been charged ten francs a night for lodgings only. Another had paid seven francs a night to sleep on a sofa, which he had done for more than a week. Two ladies, with a fat retriever dog each, had come for a week, and were returning on the second day, disgusted with the charges;—robbery they called it. Whether the pets, led by a light chain, had been slighted as well, I did not learn, but the disgust was at charges which included them. There was scarcely any one who had not some overcharge to complain of;—perhaps it was the national instinct on the return of speech. With caution there need not be cause for it. I was charged,—when in a hurry to catch the train to Versailles—at a café opposite the station, four shillings for lunch little better than I had in the city for fifteen-pence. It was the only time, and plenty too; but after what I heard I shall not complain. My expenses for the week were covered by the sum I have named, and what A—— calls the "noble and time-honoured institution of feeding" was liberally attended to.

The night travelling is no doubt fatiguing, but it is better as a "spree" than what keeps hundreds out o' nights, and it adds to the excitement. After a good night's rest at home, the thick crust of ideas and impressions will give way, and get talked off into something like order. Most will return, not loving France less, but dear old England more. I saw nothing that would make it more desirable to me to live there than here. It is a larger country, no doubt, but there is not, perhaps, so much room to stretch in it. One would sooner come to the end of the tether. We may not have so many palace privileges, but then we enjoy more rights. The French would no doubt be glad to exchange their privileges for more of our rights. Who would not rather have the right to "assist" at a political meeting, with free discussion, than be cajoled by an Emperor's fêtes? Who would barter the right to criticise the Government's last blunder, and show clearly how he could rectify it, for the privilege to walk in straight boulevards, or saunter through palaces, however grand they may be? Who would not rather read the unfettered daily paper than have that article cut and dried even by an imperial cook? Who would not rather work six days in England than seven in France? No! England for one, at any rate. When I hear that England is worn out and going down, I can't but say it is a thousand pities, because it is the best place in the world. So while I remember with pleasure what I have seen in a very hasty excursion, I say with a deeper love than ever, "England, with all thy faults, I love thee still."

ABOUT HUNTING.

We said in our last number, when speaking of the Turf, that horse-racing might be regarded as the great national pastime of England, more especially even than fox-hunting or cricket. Now that we are about to say a few words about hunting, we are almost disposed to confess that, on this point, we have changed our mind. We doubt whether, of all our national amusements, hunting is not the most thoroughly English, and the least susceptible of being taken out of England. Of course we here include Scotland and the sister isle. As regards Ireland, we may go further, and almost express a doubt whether hunting is not more Irish than English, so thoroughly has life in that country, both rural life and town life, become imbued with a love of the sport. Horse-racing has indeed become so large a business, that it must be acknowledged to involve greater interests in a pecuniary point of view, and to be on that account the more important occupation of the two. It is moreover open to all the public. Our great racecourses are as common to rich and poor as are the Queen's highways. But nevertheless we think that hunting has more national efficacy than any other of our pastimes;—that it does more to make Englishmen what they are, and to keep them as they are, extending its influences to very many of both sexes who do not hunt themselves; and we are quite sure that there is no other national amusement among ourselves, no national amusement belonging to any other people, so incapable of exportation, so alien to foreign habits, so completely the growth of the peculiarities of the people with whom it has originated, as is the sport of hunting.

Even among the nations who are nearest to us and dearest to us,—those people who have sprung from ourselves,—the amusement is not only unpractised, but is regarded with mixed horror and wonder by those who hear of it. Of course it will be understood that we are speaking now of hunting such as it is in England; of such hunting as that we are about to describe,—and not of the pursuit of game. The pursuit of game has been the necessary occupation of all young nations, and has been continued as a recreation among most nations that have come to maturity. But that hunting of which we speak has never been able to find a settled home in the United States, in British America, or in Australia. Attempts have been made in various of our colonies,—in Jamaica for instance, and in Canada. A pack of fox-hounds was for a time established in Maryland, which, of

all the United States, is perhaps more than any other like to England in its mode of life. But it has been found impracticable to establish the sport successfully in other lands, even among men who are thoroughly English in their ways and thoughts,—even among Englishmen themselves. Here, among ourselves, it is understood that a man is to enjoy the liberty of trespassing, as opposed to the law of land, when he is following a recognised pack of hounds. That is a conviction which has been able to get itself acknowledged by no other people in the world. Perhaps the nearest approach to English hunting out of England, is that to be found in the Campagna round Rome, where a pack of English fox-hounds is hunted after the English fashion by an English huntsman. The attempt in such a locality is hardly more than a proof of the intense love which Englishmen have for the sport. There are foxes in the Campagna, and there is an open space in which liberty to ride is granted; and there are English residents. Such being the case, fox-hunting has been established there; and having once been put down by the Pope, is now again alive. And there is hunting of course in France. We have all heard how the Emperor hunts the deer at Fontainebleau, and some of us have witnessed the stately ceremony. But there is in it not the slightest resemblance to English hunting. There is no competition; no liberty; no danger;—and no equality.

The reason why this should be so,—why hunting should not exist elsewhere as it does here in England,—is easy to find; much easier than any reason why any custom so strange, so opposed to all common rules as to property, should have domesticated itself among ourselves. We are to the manner born; and till we think of it and dwell upon it, the thing does not seem strange to us; but foreigners cannot be made to understand that all the world, any one who chooses to put himself on horseback, let him be a lord or a tinker, should have permission to ride where he will, over enclosed fields, across growing crops, crushing down cherished fences, and treating the land as though it were his own,—as long as hounds are running; that this should be done without any payment made to the landowner, without any payment of any kind exacted from the enjoyer of the sport, that the poorest man may join in it without question asked, and that it should be carried on indifferently over land owned by men who are friends to the practice, and over that owned by its bitterest enemies;—that, in fact, the habit is so strong that the owner of the land, with all the law to back him, with his right to the soil as perfect and as exclusive as that of a lady to her drawing-room, cannot in effect save himself from an invasion of a hundred or a hundred and fifty horsemen, let him struggle to save himself as he may. Before he can be secure he must surround his territory by fences that shall be impregnable;—and should he attempt this, he will find that he has made himself so odious in the county,

that life will be a burden to him. It may be said that in a real hunting county active antagonism to hunting is out of the question. A man who cannot endure to see a crowd of horsemen on his land, must give up his land and go elsewhere to live. It is this national peculiarity which confines the practice of hunting to England, and makes it almost impossible for an Englishman to give to a foreigner an adequate idea of the practice. Americans when they are told of it do not altogether believe what they hear. We have known them to declare that if it be as is described, law in England is inoperative, and property not secure. When they are assured that in spite of such anarchy, in the teeth of that insecurity, land in a hunting county in England is not deteriorated in value,—that it will bring perhaps a higher price per acre than any other soil in the world that is to be used only for rural purposes,—they express themselves unable to understand how this should be the case among a people alive to the ordinary commercial relations of meum and tuum. For this reason hunting, which in England has grown up to be an English habit, remains English, and cannot travel abroad; while horse-racing, which was practised in other countries before it came to England, is now thoroughly domesticated in France, and, in an altered shape, has become a passion in America.

The chief national effect produced by hunting on the manners and habits of our rural people is a certain open-air freedom of speech which we think has sprung from the sport, though it has spread itself into districts in which hounds are not kept. Men,—especially young men,—who feel themselves altogether cowed by the chairs and tables of those above them in worldly position, who acknowledge by their very gait and demeanour the superiority of rank and wealth when they meet rank and wealth in the streets of a town, keep up their heads and hold their own among the lanes and fields, because they have unconsciously learned that a certain country pursuit, open to all classes, has the effect of making all classes for a time equal in the country. We do not mean to imply that this operates on rustic labourers, or on any body of men who are paid by wages;—but it does operate very widely on all above that standing. The non-hunting world is apt to think that hunting is confined to country gentlemen, farmers, and rich strangers; but any one who will make himself acquainted with the business and position in life of the men whom he sees around him in an average hunting-field, will find that there are in the crowd attorneys, country bankers, doctors, apothecaries,—the profession of medicine has a special aptitude for fox-hunting,—maltsters, millers, butchers, bakers, innkeepers, auctioneers, graziers, builders, retired officers, judges home from India, barristers who take weekly holidays, stock-brokers, newspaper editors, artists, and sailors. In the neighbourhood of certain large towns in which hunting has come to be the fashion, the majority of the large fields which are found there will be made up of men who come out of the town and

who belong to it. A very few days passed in watching the work of a hunting-day, in observing and feeling the ways of the men around, in hearing what is said, in seeing what is done, and in breathing the atmosphere of the field, will produce that freemasonry of which we are speaking, and teach the tyro,—not that he is to speak to whom he likes, and as he likes; in the hunting-field as elsewhere the young and the unknown must wait to be addressed by their elders, and by those who are at home on the spot, or they will hardly avoid shipwreck,—but will teach him the tone of equality which prevails, and will imbue him unconsciously with a conviction that out among the fields aristocracy is not exclusive and overbearing as he will probably have been taught to believe that it is, when met in the streets. The Master of the hunt is indeed an aristocrat,—or rather an emperor on whose shoulders you can always see that the burden of government is weighing heavily; but beneath him there is freedom and equality for all, with special honour only for him who is known to be specially good at some portion of the day's work which is then in hand. And this feeling of out-a-door equality has, we think, spread from the hunting-field through all the relations of country life, creating a freedom of manner and an openness of countenance, if we may so call it, which does not exist in the intercourse between man and man in cities. We are aware that we are here claiming for hunting a wider influence than our readers generally will allow to it. The very men who have been made what they are in England by the extension of this influence do not know why it is that they are what they are. Nay;—they do not even know that they are what they are. But they who have lived long enough to observe effects, who have lived in town and in country, and who have lived with their ears and their eyes open, will, we think, agree with us, that that riding together on terms of equality of the lord and his tenant and his tradesmen has produced in English counties a community of interests and a freedom of feeling which exist nowhere else. The butcher may still touch his hat to the lord if he be addressed, or the farmer may feel that his landlord is almost a god whom he is bound to worship; but each will know that he is sitting on his own horse, that for the moment he is absolutely independent, that he and that other, lord though that other be, have come there on the same occupation, and that when hounds are running, he need stop for no man,—unless it be for the Master or his huntsman. Let the lord take the lead of him if the lord can! There is no privilege here for rank to pass out first. Something may be allowed to a woman. Something may be allowed to age. But rank has no privilege; and wealth can afford no protection. Therefore we think that of all our national pastimes, hunting is the most essentially English.

When railroads were first becoming general in the country, there was much fear among many sporting men that they would destroy

hunting. It was clear that they would cut up and subdivide the country; that they would carry noise and turmoil into remote spots, thereby banishing foxes; that they would bring town near to town, thereby tending to make all the island one city; and that they would be so fenced as to form insurmountable obstacles to straight riding. All these arguments have been found to be more or less true; and yet railroads have done so much towards hunting, that they may almost be said to have created the sport anew on a wider and much more thoroughly organised footing than it ever held before. They have brought men, and with the men their money, from the towns into the country; and the men and the money together have overcome all those difficulties which the railroads themselves have produced. Homes are now made for foxes, specially constructed for their convenience and welfare, in spots in which a minimum of disturbance may be expected; special rides across and under railroads are provided; hunting trains are arranged to take hunting men in and out of the large cities; horses by the dozens may be seen walking in and out of their boxes with as much accustomed composure as the holder of a season ticket. Before railways were made hunting was confined to the dwellers in the country, or to the few rich and idle men who could give up their whole time to the pursuit. Now a man who cares for his health, and can be happy on horseback, may work at his desk four days in the week, and hunt the other two, sixty or a hundred miles from his home, and get back to dinner with his family. Successful men of business have availed themselves so largely of this facility for getting air and exercise, that hunting has been more than doubled, instead of being crippled by the railroads. Hunting as it is now practised could not exist without railroads, the use of which has been introduced into all hunting programmes, as it has into the programme of every other amusement and business of life.

We have not space here to give a history of hunting, nor would such a history have much charm for the general reader. It may be interesting to point out that hunting as now conducted is by no means an old established pastime. Fielding wrote his "Tom Jones" in the middle of the last century, about a hundred and twenty years ago, and we learn what hunting in England was then from the life of Squire Western. It was in its early infancy, and had hardly advanced beyond the practice of the country gentleman to ride about his own land with a few beagles in pursuit of a hare. Squire Western did not like to be alone, and he would take his young friend Tom with him; but we hear nothing of any field being congregated, or of any others participating in the sport except a gamekeeper. Fielding, who himself had been a Somersetshire squire before he wrote "Tom Jones," knew well the kind of life which he was describing. A squire in those days went out hunting as squires some thirty years ago went out shooting,—as some squires, we hope, still continue to do,—with-

out much special preparation, and simply in search of an ordinary day's amusement. Then, as many squires were often doing the same thing, it was found convenient that three or four should put their small packs together, and that one man should be the Master and the director of the hounds. Thus a wider scope was given; for we may imagine that even a Squire Western would become tired of riding about always on his own land. And soon the biggest hunting squire in those parts would become the Master, as being the richest man,—for the practice of hunting by subscription packs seems to have been of later date. And so the thing grew, and the Master of hounds in a hunting county became a man of importance and of much weight among his fellow-squires.

It may be doubted whether men who now think that the cream of hunting is to be found only in a fast run of forty-five minutes, almost without a check, and with a kill in the open, would enjoy the sport as it existed even at the end of the last century. Hounds had not been trained to run with the speed which is now attained, nor had the profession of hunting produced men skilled in casting when the hounds themselves were at fault, as is done now. There was no great crowd, and the fox had a better chance when there were few or none to holloa to him. The hounds were obliged then to puzzle out their own quarry, or to give it up. Men were more patient than they now are, and the hounds were allowed to puzzle out their game. We hear more of the length of the days spent than we do of the rapidity of the pace, and we know that neither hounds nor horses can have gone very fast during those runs of many hours of which the accounts have reached us. Tillage was less abundant than at present, and the ground less perfectly drained. The enclosures, also, were smaller, and the fences, though perhaps easier of management, were more frequent. A continued scent to which hounds could work, was therefore probably more common,—for the draining of our lands has undoubtedly injured scent, and, as a matter of course, scent will lie on grass when there can be none on ploughed lands;—but all those adjuncts to the dogs' instincts which we possess, were wanting; and we may be assured that but little was known of that sort of pace which hunting men now consider to be indispensable to their enjoyment. Few men, probably, who are in the habit of hunting,—perhaps but few even of those who ride well to hounds,—are aware how much of science and how much of other outward circumstances is added to the instinct of the dog in the ordinary hunting of the present day. No doubt the best of it, those moments of ecstatic delight in which the man on his horse is able to forget all the cares of the world, and to believe that no paradise can add anything to the joy of that half hour, those well-remembered gems in life, so few and far between, have all been owing to a hot scent carried breast-high by fleet hounds. In those moments no fictitious aid is required, and the huntsman

himself may be absent and for a while not missed;—but before we have reached that acme of bliss much has been done to help the track; the fox has been stopped out of his home by human intellect, his whereabouts has been discovered probably by human knowledge; he has been watched out of the covert by human eyes; his track, in default of the hounds, has been detected by human ingenuity; and a hundred voices have been raised to assist the pack when at fault. And on ordinary days,—on days in which those creamy moments of ecstasies are only hoped for, are hardly anticipated, and do not come,—it will often be the case that the huntsman will have much more to do with hunting the fox than have the hounds. Were it not so, the fox, understanding by his instinct the imperfection of the scent, would refuse to be driven away, would hang about his wood all day, probably dying there at last,—or would else turn and traverse, and twist about, running like a hare, and refusing to go far from his home. But the manner of his turning is within the compass of the professional skill of the instructed huntsman, and the fox owes a bitterer grudge to the guile of his human enemy than he does to the instinct of his canine foe. Before men had learned this skill, before money was forthcoming to make such skill profitable, when hunting was not a science as it is now, in those days of Squire Western of which we are speaking, the hounds had the hunting much more to themselves. We often hear sportsmen loud in their reprobation of the interference with which hounds are treated, reviling the men who holloa, and complaining of huntsmen for over-diligence in casting. "You should leave hounds alone and let them hunt," men will say. If hounds were left alone and let to hunt, such men, trained as they now have been trained to hard riding, would not often find that which they have come out to seek. We are sometimes disposed to think that the time will arrive when hunting will be practised altogether without a fox,—without any game to run,—and that the sport will be managed with a bit of rag dipped every five minutes in asafœtida. The growing impatience of the age will hardly endure much longer the deficient scent or the slack running of the imperfect fox.

The big squire among the little squires, who became so naturally the Master of hounds in his neighbourhood, has gradually been converted to,—or is gradually giving way to,—the manager of a subscription pack. Between the one and the other there was a very grand and a very English phase of hunting, of which, indeed, some instances, though now but few, still remain. This is the phase on which the great lord undertook the enormous expense of hunting the county in a lordly style, for the amusement and recreation of all those who lived within reach of his magnificence, and defraying the whole expense of the establishment out of his own pocket. The Duke of Beaufort's hunt, and the Berkeley hunt, are still, we believe, maintained after this princely fashion. And there is something alluring in the idea of the

great seigneur of the county thus providing for the amusement, not only of his tenants and dependants, but also for that of the whole country-side. It is a remnant of that powerful splendour which enabled the old feudal lords to carry into battle their own followers, and to keep a troop of armed cavaliers, always ready for work, under their own roofs. But life is now so changed in all its ways, that this lordly magnificence is not in accordance with the tastes of the day. Men now prefer to hunt with subscription packs, in doing which they can pay their own proportion of the expenditure, and feel that they follow their amusement without other debt to the Master of their hunt than that which is always due to zeal and success in high position. It is very well that the Queen's hounds should be maintained without payment from those who follow them. They are paid for by the country, and the non-hunting population has not as yet deputed any Joseph Hume of the day to demur to the expenditure. But in regard to hunting generally, it is found that packs maintained by subscription are those which best meet the wishes of hunting men. We remember to have ridden with a noble earl, whose hounds always went into covert punctually at eleven if he were not coming, but never stirred from the meet till twelve if he were expected. We always felt while waiting through that hour that we were too dependent on the noble earl, and that he could hardly have enforced such a rule had he taken a subscription for maintaining the pack of hounds of which he was the Master.

Sportsmen like to feel that they are paying for their own amusement; but yet,—and we feel ourselves constrained to make this charge as a serious accusation against a large number of hunting men,—there is very much of niggardliness in this matter. Gentlemen are invited to undertake the management of fox-hounds with a subscription,—the understanding being that the man so invited shall give his time and experience, and that the necessary expenditure shall be defrayed by the hunt in general;—and yet it is too often the case that the amount subscribed is altogether inadequate for the purpose. There is a feeling that as the position of a Master of hounds is a place of honour, and much coveted, therefore the holder of it should be content to pay out of his own pocket a portion of the public expenditure. We have always felt that the argument was one which should never be allowed to have any weight. If gentlemen are content to hunt as dependants of a seignorial Master of hounds, in the manner which we have just described, let them find their grand seigneur, and accept the gift of his magnificence. There are men of wealth who will be willing to spend it in that fashion. But if there is to be the feeling in the hunting-field that the expense is borne by the gentlemen of the hunt generally, there should, we think, be no compromise in the matter. Let us, who hunt, be dependent or independent;—but let us not indulge our feeling of independence with a false boast, or comfort ourselves with an assurance that though we are contented to take our coats and waist-

coats from the generous hand of a rich neighbour, we pay for our boots and breeches ourselves.

It is somewhat difficult to state with accuracy the cost of maintaining a pack of fox-hounds, because circumstances differ greatly in different counties. The distances to be travelled with one pack are much greater than those which are to be encountered in another; the nature of the ground and of the fences require faster and stronger horses here than they do there; and circumstances varied in other respects enable horses, hounds, and men, to be in the field more frequently in one part of England, than they can in another. The following list, however, may be taken as giving, we believe, a by no means extravagant statement of the ordinary annual expenditure of a Master of hounds, in reference to his stable and kennel. We presume that the pack is hunted four days a week, and that second horses are supplied for the huntsman always, and as occasion may require for the first whip. It will, of course, be understood that the expense of the Master's own stud and private servants are not here included, and that the items named are simply such as would be necessary if the pack were hunted by a committee of gentlemen managing a fund raised by subscription.

Wages of one huntsman and of two whips	£250
Ditto of feeder	55
Ditto of grooms, second horsemen, stable assistants, &c.	300
Servants' clothing	180
Cost of horses:—eighteen horses purchased at £60 each, kept at work for three years, and sold for £15 each. £15 each horse per annum	270
Feeding for eighteen horses	455
Saddler's bill	150
Blacksmith	60
Veterinary expenses (including medicine)	45
Horseflesh and meal for hounds (fifty-five couple)	510
Rent of stables and kennels, including rates and interest of money spent in building and fitting	80
Assessed taxes on servants, horses, and hounds	65
Coals and candles	50
Travelling expenses	80
Incidental expenses	150
	£2700

We are aware that if this statement should meet the eyes of any Master of hounds, or of gentlemen cognizant with the management of stables and kennels, exception may be taken to many of the details. Many Masters give higher prices for their horses; some will say that they do not realise such sum as that named for those that are cast; others will feel sure that their horses last them more than the three years specified; but we think that, taking one county with another, the average would be found to be nearly correct. Wages again, and all inci-

dental expenses, will vary very much. Travelling expenses will, in some hunting counties, be much higher than we have put them. In others, the feeding of hounds will be less, because it will be generally unnecessary to buy horse flesh. But we feel assured that we have not given an extravagant statement;—that a Master of hounds who goes out four days a week, and does so with that attendance of servants which the nature of the sport now demands, will not be able to place the sum-total of his expenses at a lower figure than that we have named. And yet it must be acknowledged that in many counties in which four days are expected from the Master, it is found quite impossible to raise such a sum by subscription as that above stated.

There are, of course, very many items in the expenditure of hunting a county which it is impossible to insert in such a list, because those in one county will bear no proportion at all to those in another;—and also because in some counties they fall almost exclusively on the Master, in others they do so to a great degree, in others to a less degree, and again in others perhaps not at all. Nothing has been set down for gamekeepers, nothing for earth-stopping, nothing for rent and planting and protection of coverts, and nothing for that terrible matter of poultry. Fees for gamekeepers are almost always paid by the Master. The stopping of earth, which is a matter much more important in some counties than in others, may, to a great degree, be left to the gentry and farmers when the gentry and farmers are zealous and know what they are about. It is not generally expected that a Master should pay rent for coverts, but for his own credit's sake he will often do so. He will hire shooting here and there,—not wanting the shooting, but knowing that with a minimum of shooting there will be a maximum of foxes. He ought to have nothing to do with compensation for poultry;—but old women with the sad remains of ducks' heads and turkeys' throats will naturally go to him, and he will often find himself compelled to satisfy them. We have presumed that his hounds came to him from heaven, and we have charged nothing for their cost. It is the Master's practice, no doubt, to breed them;—but some must have been bought originally. In addition to all this, he will want a private secretary, and in the matter of postage is a staunch supporter of the Queen's revenue. It has been truly said of a Master of hounds that he must always have his hand in his pocket, and always have a guinea in it.

It may be as well that we should here state also what is the ordinary personal cost of hunting to the sportsman, and we shall then see at a glance how small a proportion of that expenditure is the subscription required from him for maintaining the pack, even if he be willing to pay his fair share of the cost. And here again we must observe that the cost of a hunting establishment must vary greatly according to the circumstances in life of its owner. The country gentleman, who lives in the middle of a hunt, has few or

no travelling expenses, has his own paddocks for his horses, pays no appreciable rent for his stables, has servants in his yard at low wages, and can, from his position in the county, generally carry on the work with a lesser stud than will suit the sportsman from a distance. In the following statement we have endeavoured to give the ordinary expenditure of a man who has to supply himself with all that he requires for hunting after having taken up his residence in some hunting country. It will often be the case, perhaps more often than not, that such a man will not burden himself with a stable, but will pay so much per horse to some keeper of stables. He will find much comfort in doing so, but we do not think that in point of expense there will be much difference. Hunting is a pursuit in which the close-fisted man will carry on the war at a very much cheaper rate than he who is thoughtless in such matters. There is money to be lavished and money to be saved on every item,—from the cost of your horse to the charge for removing a shoe. But this spirit of economy, or of extravagance, will prevail with the same effect whether you keep stables of your own, or have your dealings with a stable-keeper. If you will consent to ride hired horses on all occasions, you may no doubt go over the ground at a cheaper rate than you can with your own cattle. But you must be indifferent to the feeling of ownership, which is one of the great delights of hunting; you must be prepared to ride a roarer, which is the purgatory of hunting; the horses given to you will generally gallop and jump, but they will always be stale;—and you must be superbly indifferent to the safety of your own neck. Submitting to these drawbacks you can, we believe, ride hired horses at least 25 per cent. cheaper than you can keep them for yourself. And the man who does this will have the advantage of hunting, and of quitting the expense of hunting, just when it suits him to do either the one or the other.

We have presumed, in preparing the following details, that the owner of the stud desires to hunt four days a week, and that he requires two horses out on each day. Not a large proportion of men who hunt wants by any means so extensive an establishment. Stables of four and three horses are, we believe, much more common than stables of seven. Comparatively few men do hunt four days a week, and of those who do, many are young enough and light enough to go through the day upon one horse. But we have found it easier to take the account of a full stable, and will simply say that the items may be divided so as to show the ordinary expenditure necessary for one, three, four, or any other number of horses. The result will be about this;—that he who rides with one horse will pay £5 a-day for his sport, and that he who rides with two horses will pay £10. I have presumed that seven horses are necessary,—in order that eight may leave the stable every week. A lesser number will not suffice. Out of seven there will generally be at least one that requires tem-

porary retirement, and six ready for the field are needed for such work.

Servants' wages (three)	£130
Servants' clothing	50
Hunting clothes for self	15
Cost of horses :—seven in use purchased at £120 each, sold at £45, and kept at work for three years each—annual cost of £25	175
Feeding seven horses, £30 per horse *	210
Saddler's bill	30
Blacksmith's ditto	20
Veterinary expenses (including medicine)	25
Rent of stables	25
Taxes	10
Travelling expenses	100
Incidental expenses,—coals, gas, candles, brooms, brushes, buckets, &c., &c.	50
	£840

This expenditure will thus give a man four days' hunting a week for twenty-one weeks in the year, at £10 a day. When any sportsman shall find that he has achieved this, and has ridden his eighty-four days between the beginning of November and the middle of April, we will congratulate him on the state of his own health, on that of his stud, on the ease with which he manages the ordinary business of his life,—and especially in regard to the weather.

It will be observed by those who themselves defray the expense of a hunting establishment that nothing has been here put down as the cost of subscribing to the pack ;—and yet it is admitted by nearly all that some such subscription must be paid. The amount, however, is not unfrequently so small as to add but a very slight percentage to the other expenses of the amusement. Men almost think that in hunting they should have for nothing the servants, the horses, the hounds, and the game,—as they do have for nothing the woods which they see drawn and the land over which they ride. If we may be allowed to make a suggestion in a matter so extremely delicate, we would say that hunting men should ordinarily fix their subscriptions at about 10*s.* for each horse they have out during the season. The man who hunts once a week with one horse would thus pay his £10 or £15,—which should be held to be sufficient ;—whereas the sportsman who is enabled by his leisure and his pocket to hunt four days a week, with two horses for each day, should not subscribe less than £70 or £80 per annum.

It will be thought by some who have seen the large crowds of horsemen at many of our meets, but who have not analysed those

* It will be observed that the feed of horses is placed at a lower figure in regard to the Master's stables than it is here fixed. The Master will have advantages,—especially as to summering horses,—which a private sportsman cannot generally obtain ; and will in most cases have his own hay, vetches, &c.

crowds, that if the above advice of ours were taken, much more money would be subscribed than is needed to make up the sum named as the proper amount of a Master's expenses; but when the crowd has been analysed, such will not be found to be the case. Farmers should never be allowed to pay. They give their land, and preserve the foxes, and have to sustain loss to their crops and poultry without a complaint,—as best they may. Clergymen rarely pay. It would not be fitting that bishops should know that their names are on the lists,—and then they act as chaplains to the hunt. Doctors do not pay, setting our bones for us when they are broken,—sometimes gratuitously. The small tradesmen never pay anything. The ruck of horsekeepers, innkeepers, and of horsey men generally who ride in black coats, hunting caps, and old brown breeches, and which is to be seen with every hunt, which comes from heaven knows where, and lives heaven knows how, never pays anything. When you are buried beneath your horse in a ditch, two or three of such will generally be there to take you out,—and will understand well how to do it. Ladies pay nothing for amusing themselves,—either when hunting or elsewhere,—and we hope it may be long before any one will wish that they should do so. Boys who come home at Christmas to their ponies and mince-pies pay nothing. Old gentlemen who toddle out on their cobs if the weather be fine to see what is going on, do not often add to the fund; and then strangers to the hunt of course do not pay. It must be a small field that will give a larger percentage of paying men than one in four.

The upshot of all that we have said tends to show that hunting is a costly amusement. There can be but a few men, we may suppose, who can afford, and will be willing to pay £800 or £900 a year for a single diversion. But it must be remembered that men may hunt,—as we have said before,—without hunting four days a week, and may hunt also without the luxury of a second horse. We have heard men say that they would rather not hunt at all than go out no oftener than twice a week,—and that to hunt as the owner of a single horse is simple misery, and the name of hunting only. We altogether disagree with these statements, and think them to be bombastic and pretentious. If we could venture to offer advice on such a matter to young beginners, we should counsel them rather to confine themselves to two days a week, believing that hunting, like any other amusement, will pall by great frequency. We will not here take advantage of our situation and preach a sermon to show that no man with a purport in his life should devote more than two days in a week to any amusement; but we will confine ourselves simply to the fact that the man who hunts twice a week,—or more thoroughly still, he who hunts but once a week,—is the sportsman who is ever the keenest. It is he who feels that the day is never long enough, and that the Master is a recreant to think of returning to the kennel

before black night has thoroughly established herself. It is he who is satisfied with the run when he gets it, thinking it to be all delightful, not criticising the pace too minutely, not quarrelling with the nature of the ground, not caring much whether the fox has gone straight or has turned, putting up with little when but little is to be had, and being a glutton for much when much comes in his way. Nothing strikes us more in the hunting-field than the fastidious indolence of men who are every day in the saddle. They will hardly take the trouble to be on the look out for sport unless they be at some pet covert, or riding a favourite horse. If the wind blow, or the sun shine, if the land clog a little or be too dry, if it be the dog pack instead of the bitches, or the bitch pack instead of the dogs, if the wood be large, or foxes reported to be scarce, or if, by any not uncommon chance, these gentlemen shall have got out of bed on the wrong side in the morning, all hope of hunting is over for that day. A man who has only one day in the week to give to his amusement is more chary with his hopes before he relinquishes them.

And as for the man with the one horse——! But here, gentle reader, if you will permit the solicism, we will leave for a few minutes the authoritative grandiosity of the plural number, and approach you with a closer personification. He who now writes these words, possibly for our advantage, ostensibly for your delectation, was a man with one horse for some eight years of his hunting life, and he flatters himself that he saw what hunting was. He knows, at any rate, that he enjoyed hunting then as he has not enjoyed it since, and may never hope to do again. And he feels, also, that when he sees a young man with only one day at his command, and only one horse belonging to him,—and with the proper sort of spirit within that young man's hunting gear,—he envies that young man as he never has envied any other human being on the earth.

We will now return to the plural number, and to propriety of expression. We have stated above what will be the average expenditure of a large stable. The man who wishes to begin with one horse, may divide the sum we have named by seven, and will find that he will have the amount for which he ought to carry on his amusement. He will, of course, keep his horse at a livery stable, and it will cost him about £120 per annum, including the fees to the groom, some little expenses for travelling, and the price of his boots and breeches. There will also come out of that sum, if he is careful, the necessary percentage on the original cost of his horse. For that expenditure he may have from twenty to twenty-four days' hunting in the year. If I say that he may, without additional cost, ensure good health and good society, learn good manners, and see Englishmen at their best, we of the Saint Pauls Magazine may perhaps be thought to entertain exaggerated ideas of the benefit of hunting.

GLASS HOUSES.

Not having any great relish for green peas or fresh strawberries in December, and preferring at all times the humblest daisy to the most flaunting exotic, we do not purpose writing a scientific essay on the construction of those edifices wherein men rear their unseasonable delicacies, and generally at an expense out of all proportion to the result. Our intention is to treat solely of the baseless and visionary fabrics beneath which men endeavour to conceal those pet vices and frailties which, though so pleasant,—and often profitable,—to the owners, would lose much of their charm if exposed to the vulgar eye. Alas! they little dream of the fragile nature of the materials they have used in constructing the airy dwelling, or of its insecurity, until on a sudden a small stone crashes through the roof, and the hidden imposture is revealed amidst the contemptuous sneers and the unrestrained delight of the bystanders, who ever sympathise rather with the injurers than with the injured.

The love of sport,—seasoned with destruction to show the presence of power,—is inherent in the human mind, and the pleasures of mischief have a fascination which few can at all times withstand. As boys, undeterred by the presence of a policeman round the corner, will throw stones at the obtrusive and convenient hot-house, so men will chuck their equally destructive pellets of the brain at whatever for the moment arouses their pugnacity, without entertaining the slightest fear of interference on the part of the critics. For even as the legal guardian over material property, on the plea of protecting the master's house, will be guilty of petty felony at the faltering voice of the beloved cook; so the moral policeman, on the plea of protecting the public from the attacks of authors, will be often guilty of the most fearful scurrility, and though his duty is to promote social order, will sometimes contrive to mar matters rather than to mend them.

Though, from the weakness of human nature, we are all of us apt to covet the goods and chattels of our wealthier brethren, yet our envy does not extend to the desire of sharing in their moral qualities; and, from the prince to the peasant, we are prone individually to say, "Lord, I thank thee that thou hast not made me like other men;" and then we go over the catalogue of the follies and frailties of our neighbours, and wantonly cause sad havoc to their moral glass houses, foolishly believing that our own little structure is either too modest and unpretentious to attract notice, or else that it is so carefully constructed

as to be proof against any attack from without. "Ah! you poor self-deluded man," as our unctuous friend the Reverend Ebenezer Slap-bang, that mighty pillar of the tabernacle, would say; "the gentleman in black laughs at your ingenuity, and in spite of your stone and iron and cement will find his way into your dwelling; and, even so, there shall be a faulty spot in your moral edifice through which the stone of the assailant shall crash, and leave you weeping amidst the shattered ruins."

National glass houses have the first claim on the philosopher's attention on account of the numerical strength both of the assailants and the defenders; but, as is usually the result of employing too many hands in the construction, those edifices are less impregnable than those reared by, or under the supervision of, a single mind. The British glass house is a large and important structure, with a solidity of masonry by no means proportionate to the lightness of the roof, the materials of which are of as perishable a nature as is the miserable stucco of our actual dwelling-houses. But, in a political point of view, there is a great resemblance between the national glass houses of every country. Like the shops "opened to supply the public with pure Alton ale," they have been erected ostensibly for supplying the world with those blessings peculiarly in the power of each respective nation to bestow. But whether it be "free trade" promoted by the ships of England; "liberty, equality, and fraternity," proclaimed by the eagles of France; or "German unity," established by the needle-guns of Prussia, the real motive has ever been selfish greed; and when the harbingers of "peace and goodwill," whether "commercial delegate," "proconsul," or military "Meinherr," have obtained a momentary success in the spread of their doctrines, it has always been accompanied by a draft at sight on the fortunate recipients of a nation's favour. "But if I am to pay so much for the blessing, I don't want it," says the poor victim. "No matter," replies the benevolent promoter of public welfare, "you must pay all the same, and you will receive hereafter the full benefit of the gift we offer you."

Hereafter, indeed! Oh, yes! at such time when another glorious benefactor shall arrive with a bran new gift under his arm, and shall say to the eye-staring and mouth-gaping populace, "Behold, I come to scatter peace and plenty on your benighted land, and to free you from the despotism which has hitherto crippled your energies,"—and after the loud shouting and mad tossing of greasy caps in the air are over, and ere the smouldering ashes of the glorifying bonfires are cold, he, too, shall present his little bill, and, doubtless, it shall also be duly paid! Alas! in each country are there not millions who have greater need of the gift it so ostentatiously offers to others, and would it not be as well to begin the philanthropic crusade at home? Oh! smash those national glass houses, for they are huge impostures, which too often only conceal tyranny!

If, on the other hand, we regard these glass houses from a social point of view, the result is equally unsatisfactory. Break but a pane of the British glass house, and you may see License tearing through the mask of Liberty, and Poverty peeping under the cloak of Wealth. Do the same to the French edifice, and you may behold Insolence grinning behind the thin veil of Politeness, and Egotism blustering in Cosmopolitan attire. Perform the operation on the German building, and you may see Lethargy, heavy with the fumes of beer and tobacco, dozing on the couch of Philosophy. Lastly, knock at the American structure, and you will find Intolerance ranting in the pulpit of Toleration, and Slavery crouching beneath the feet of Independence. Moreover, through the glittering vanity of the exterior you may equally behold all the nakedness of the inner dwelling. "Oh! smash those national glass houses," again we cry, for they conceal not only the petty vices, but also the real virtues, of a people.

We do not purpose to treat at any length of the political glass houses. The subject no doubt is an inviting one, but in our reckless progress might we not unintentionally tread upon the toes of our worthy Editor? Still we must have just one cast, with a little stone, at the glittering edifices, which, however, are made so entirely of glass that one needs scarcely to break a single pane to get a peep at the by no means imposing contents. Shall we not find one pet idol shrined in all of them, whose features, though more or less begrimed with paint, are the same in form? The Tory, the Whig, and the Radical buildings, however differing in colour, are all created for the same purpose, namely, to preserve the Constitution. It is only on breaking the panes we can discover that the vice they respectively conceal is one differing in degree rather than in distinctive character. The conservatism of the Tory is a desire to keep what he has got, and to let no one else share in his privileges; the conservatism of the Whig is to retain his possessions, but to assist others in acquiring property,—provided it be taken from the Tories; and the conservatism of the Radical is not only to keep what he has got, but also to confiscate the entire property of both the antagonists; and possibly the day may come when the Radical, like the lawyer in the fable, having swallowed the constitutional oyster, shall bestow a shell each upon the Tory and the Whig.

The British commercial glass house is a most imposing building from its dimensions, but it has spread out by piecemeal in all directions, so that it wants the solidity of a single structure; whilst the amount of glass it contains arouses continual fear and anxiety. Gaily the flags wave from its thousand pinnacles, and millions of tongues proclaim aloud the blessings of commercial enterprise. But when the child has scraped the gilt off the crown she finds that her king is, after all, only common gingerbread, not a whit better in

quality than the material of the edible peasant. So, lifting the heavy jewelled veil of commercial enterprise, we see beneath nothing but common greed, to satisfy which it matters little whether the means be a bale of clothing or a barrel of raw spirits. When, moreover, we look at far-distant lands, once swarming with "ignorant and cruel savages," we see a few miserable disease-stricken wretches, who are the sole remnants of a mighty race, whilst hecatombs upon hecatombs of human beings attest to the blessings which attend the "progress of civilisation." Alas! commerce had need to have scattered some good to mitigate the evils it has spread; and as to the boasted morality of the British merchant, we would rather be silent on that subject. If you need an answer, go and seek it from the lips of those dupes whose ruin has been caused by a blind belief in that very morality.

We do not purpose at present to make a hole in the glass houses of active philanthropy, whether promulgated in social congresses or other public meetings where men air their peculiar crotchets, with but little tangible result. Nor shall we venture to lay impious hands on the huge legal edifice which seems to have been erected to conceal a contempt for justice, or to fence it round with such thorny palisades that its divine presence can only be reached after much moral laceration and material loss of wealth. But the structure, however labyrinthine, is not proof against the attacks of common-sense, would men only condescend to use it; but they prefer the intricate way, and well deserve to suffer the penalty of their blindness and folly.

The architect of the national glass house is Pride; of the individual one, Hypocrisy is the builder; and of all the edifices of the latter order that of religion is the most important and the most common. It is also the most impregnable, because the reverence generally aroused even by the outward appearance of religion is sufficient to prevent us from attacking any one who wears a decent mask, and not until the rent garments no longer conceal the deformity beneath will the respected cloak be indignantly torn off. But when a pane of the seemingly sacred edifice is shattered, what horrible details are revealed! For therein are not only exposed the vices most directly opposed to the spirit of Christianity, but, as the humiliating pages of the Newgate Calendar too well reveal, you may feel the presence of the foulest crimes which human nature can be guilty of committing. And when the criminals are exposed, what groans of disgust, and it may be of fear, are uttered by those who have possessed themselves of snug edifices of a like nature! But we will not dwell on the theme, for the more we proceed in our inquiry, the more chance is there that our faith in the national morality may be rudely shaken.

Another glass house equally meriting destruction is that which the "charitable" man raises to hide from the world his meanness and

selfishness. He is generally a pertinacious hunter after titled society, and if "my lady" asks his assistance for a "bed and blanket" society, of which she is the patroness, with many a smile and much expression of gratitude "for the opportunity afforded him of assisting in the promotion of such a benevolent object," he will tender his guinea. But mark his demeanour to his wife when he reaches home, and you will see that he is not very grateful "for the opportunity;" and most assuredly that guinea will be eventually repaid out of his daughter's miserable pittance. It is true that the hypocrite will preach to her on the blessings which must rest on those who spend their money in charity rather than on dress; but can she believe him, and what must a daughter think of such a father?

Some people, in erecting their glass houses, think less of the thickness of the panes than of the putty which cements them; but the oleaginous matter is scarcely proof against the first expression of contempt. Of such, the scandal-monger,—the destroyer of the reputation of others,—is by far the most hateful. He needs no assistance to spread the infamous lie, for he will invent it himself and be his own purveyor, for he dreads detection if he assists another in a similar operation. His method of proceeding is after this fashion. He will go to a friend of the person he seeks to injure, and exclaiming against "those wretches who diffuse evil reports," he will say, "By-the-bye, how sorry I was to hear that 'So-and-So' has been guilty—of this, or of that;" and when asked for his authority, he will say that the intelligence was imparted to him "under a promise of the strictest secrecy, and that his sole motive in making known the painful fact was that it might be investigated by the best friend of the poor fellow." The device succeeds, and is often attended with fatal consequences. If ever any one comes to you saying, "I have been told by a person whose name I cannot mention," depend upon it you have caught one of the species we refer to, and we beg you not to be contented by morally smashing a single pane, but to shiver the entire glass house, and bury the contemptible owner of it in the ruins.

With respect to those who, in common parlance, are said to "try and make themselves out to be worse than they are," we regard their glass houses with suspicion, and even with aversion. Notwithstanding their simple and whitewashed appearance, we have no faith in the virtues of the inmates, but rather believe that, as a man will sacrifice a sprat to catch a herring, so those extremely honest people will confess to trifling errors which they do not possess in order to conceal the big vices of which they are really guilty. One man will acknowledge that he is a bit of a glutton, which he is not, merely to conceal that he is an habitual drunkard, which he is; another will own to the folly of imprudence, which he has not, in order to cloak the vice of avarice, which he has; a third will confess that he is wholly sceptical of human virtue, which he is not, merely to conceal the envy, hatred,

and uncharitableness which he really possesses; a fourth;—but why proceed? We might continue the parallel through the whole catalogue of errors and vices, and so we content ourselves by saying, Never place any reliance on those who "try to make themselves out to be worse than they are," and smash their impudent glass houses whenever you have an opportunity to do so.

Nor less open to suspicion is the glass house in which dwells the "honest man who always says what he means." The edifice is always uncouth and unsightly, and we fancy that we can trace the presence of envy through the rugged panes; for, as to mere prejudice, we make no account of it in our moral survey. But even if we believe in this man's sincerity, we must pity the taste which makes a man insensible to the pain he inflicts on others. Depend upon it, there is more vanity in such honesty than there is a love of simple truth.

As to the little glass house of stoicism which the gentle cynic raises in order to conceal his real tenderness and benevolence, God forbid that we should hurl the smallest stone at the venial imposture. Nay, there is no necessity for either violence or fraud, for at the faintest cry of real distress the inmate will peep out, and when detected,—like an absent man, who has come into the open air without his hat,—he will put his hand to his bald pate, and mumble some feeble excuse about the genial weather. It is of no use, sir, for you to tell us that people who encourage street-performers ought to be severely punished, and that the latter ought to be whipped and sent to prison. Did we not detect a moisture in your eye, and such a frequent use of the pocket-handkerchief as implied a fearful nasal obstruction, when you sat the other day in a foreign market-place looking at a poor tumbler going wearily through his million-and-tenth performance? Think of that, ye stage-managers who boast of "Pretty Se-usan, don't say no," being thrice encored for two hundred and sixty nights, —more shame to the audience, we say. And when the poor juggler's wan-faced little girl in faded tinsel came up, trembling at your ferocious appearance, did you not slyly slip a five-franc piece into her tiny hand, and gently clench her bits of fingers over the coin to hide it from the vulgar gaze, and then quickly slink away as if you were ashamed of the deed? Nor was it the amount of your gift,—had it been ten times greater,—that made us marvel; but that you should be detected in committing an offence for which, according to your own words, you ought to be "severely punished." But go on; we would not punish you, —no, not even though we know well that you derived fifty times more pleasure from that clumsy performance than you ever felt in witnessing the marvellous feats of the accomplished Houdin.

As to the simple-minded man who believes that his sagacity is more than a match for cunning or fraud, and who boasts that no one "can do him," we will pass by his dwelling without hurling a stone at the

fragile exterior; for he does no harm to any one but himself, and is sure to be found outside the building at the sound of the approaching steps of any smooth-tongued rascal.

In spite of the antique and solemn appearance of the philosopher's edifice, we must not so far neglect our duty as to leave it unscathed. Bang;—there goes a pane. Now approach boldly, and have no fear of disturbing deep reveries which shall tend to the solution of mighty questions that affect the future welfare of the human race. Look in; you will most probably find the venerable sage stretched on a sofa, with a cigar in his mouth, and a volume of Paul de Kock in his hands; nor does his face betray the pain of intense thought, for it is only when he sallies abroad that he dons the well-known black-velvet tunic and skull-cap, with a worm-eaten folio under his arm, and his head bent to earth in solemn reverie. But there is, too, a kind of philosophy in his secret pursuit, which is, in some poor way, profitable to himself; and has he not the first right to benefit by the application of those philosophical principles which have taken him so many years to elucidate? The great vice, however, which the revered sage conceals under his heavy cloak of wisdom is a narrow contempt for what he terms "the grovelling propensities of mankind." "A bas la philosophie," O star-gazer, if wisdom is to make us insensible to the pleasures which have always pleased. Don't talk of gall and ashes because the untutored intellect revels in the present sunshine. Evil may follow, truly, but sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. Why tell us that possibly to-morrow we may grieve over the pleasures of to-day? Were we to follow your sage advice, though we might escape pain, yet we should pass away from earth, possibly, without having partaken of a single blessing pertaining to our mortal lot. We may be fools for laughing at old Punch and his stale pugnacity, but why condemn us because the grimness of thy mouth is thereby made more grim? The fault is in thy superior wisdom, and not in our inferior intelligence.

The professional glass house,—literary, artistic, or musical,—however aerial in outward appearance, is so interlaced within by technicalities, that its weakness by no means corresponds to its apparent insolidity. But though filmy, and almost imperceptible, by means of its hired covering, the panes are so thin that they yield to the slightest pressure; and, looking through the "technicalities," we can detect the big words,—the well-known spots of white or patches of red, and the oft-repeated "suspensions," which conceal the real poverty of invention. We know the big word, the white spot, and the red patch by sight, but their no-meaning who can fathom? We feel that the soft squeak of the oboe, and the growling of the double-bass, announce respectively the approach of the innocent heroine or of the guilty villain of the piece; but the trick is stale, and we are no longer excited by that "piling up of the agony" to sink into lowest bathos.

If people would only employ the smallest amount of the perception given to them exclusively, they might understand it; but they will not do so, and therefore are touched alone by that which excites a momentary shock,—whether it be a big word, a white spot, a patch of red, or a sudden crash of the bass trombone. So we wonder not that the inmates of the professional glass houses chuckle in seeming security. Oh, good friend!—poet, painter, or musician,—we will honour you for showing us what gifts you really possess, but we must despise your clap-trap. If you merely seek to win the attention of the ignorant, you may obtain success by employing a farthing rush-light; but if you want your real worth to be revealed, pray give us the light of a lamp, or, in its absence, of a wax-candle at least.

Erasmus Bawler is seemingly a learned man whose information is unbounded. He is equally at home on politics, religion, science, or art; and his knowledge of classical history is so great, that he could not write even on "ducks and green peas" without countless allusions to Greek or Latin worthies. You marvel where and how he has picked up his vast erudition. Break a pane of his glass house, and you will see by his side twenty quarto volumes, to which ever and anon he refers. Oh, Erasmus Bawler! leave your encyclopædia for a few moments, and come out into the open air. The observation of Human Nature will give you wealth far more sterling than the base metal you have hitherto passed, however successfully.

Facile Flourish is a most popular painter, and we will enter his studio and watch the consummate genius at work. We see him with a jaunty air putting on the flicks of paint,—we perceive none in Nature's work,—anon producing the "firm outline,"—there are no such outlines in Nature,—or the grimaces of expression, which are not Nature's making; and we go away from the inspection of his work with an idea that all this cleverness only conceals the want of real genius. Oh, Facile Flourish! give us a little more head-work and a little less hand-work, though we know that the market price of the latter is at least one hundred guineas per square foot.

Signora Squilisi has a fine voice, which, properly employed, would "lap the soul in Elysium;" but she prefers the shower of bouquets and the clapping of hands to any gratitude of the heart. She is a great favourite, and her admirers think she has endless treasures in her florid glass house, the panes of which are her grimaces, personal and vocal. Remove these, and within is emptiness. Or listen to Herr Bangbang at the piano; and, watching the lightning rapidity of his facile fingers, you marvel at his wonderful execution. Bah! Wonderful execution, indeed! Don't you know of a certain animal which kicks up a dust in order to conceal its presence from the enemy? Well, Herr Bangbang's execution is only dust,—vile dust,—that sticks in the ears; though, truly, the latter lose nothing by the concealment of the Herr's genius. Oh, professor! if you will play us a few of

Mendelssohn's Lieder, we will tell you what we think of your executive power. We know that they are "ohne worte," and wish we could say that your performance was equally without "palaver."

Oh, ye stern and unbending critics! self-accredited ambassadors to the empire of taste! Ye unflinching champions of truth and implacable enemies of falsehood! Fain would we stealthily pass your glass houses with shoeless feet; for we know well that you are ever on the watch with bludgeon or blunderbuss to chastise the insolent intruders into your sacred precincts. But in truth your edifices are so imposing,—the outsides are so rich in painting, gilding, and sculptured ornaments,—that our curiosity to behold the vast treasures that must be concealed within overcomes our natural fear and reverence. Bang—bang—bang—bang—bang—bang! Lord help us and deliver us! There are six panes broken at least! Well, there is but little use in running away now that the mischief is done, so let us go and take a hasty look within, trusting that the sight of the many beauties we may possibly see will compensate us for the kicks which we shall certainly receive. Why, "good gracious!" as our dear old chum at the club would say, what do we see in the almost deserted mansions? Where are the lovely tapestries, the rich carpets, the luxurious sofas, and other articles of taste to correspond with the gorgeous magnificence of the outside? Above all, where is the odour of wisdom and peace? In the first building we see a critic sitting at a table amidst piles of books and papers: one foot is through a picture; by heavens! a Landseer too; and the other, very muddy, is on the pages of a new publication, whilst he tears his hair and scrunches the pen between his teeth. In the second we see a man blowing out long bladders, such as the disguised Leporello uses on the stage to pummel therewith the simple Masetto. In the third we perceive heaps of sawdust, which the industrious owner is stuffing into bags all labelled as knowledge. A fourth, in a corner of his now violated house, is making from gallstones and sulphur an explosive powder which he trusts may be equally efficacious in blowing into fragments poet, painter, or player; while a fifth is compounding a thick paste with treacle, jam, and honey. Lastly, in the sixth, I see a man in a profuse perspiration, casting cannon-balls and offensive rockets by the million. Surely these must be magazines erected for the manufacture of weapons of destruction, and not temples or academies whence issues the voice of wisdom, accompanied by that sacred fire which removes the darkness of ignorance and illumines the path of truth. Alack! alack! let us try and slink through the crowds of envious authors, artists, musicians, singers, and actors, who with hungry and beseeching looks crowd round the palatial dwellings. Oh, critics! if you will only be more moderate in uttering your opinions, if you will divest your mind of prejudice, and, above all, endeavour to advance taste by di-

covering beauty rather than by exposing deformity, the public and the public's intellectual purveyors will be deeply grateful. Sore in body, and afflicted in mind, we take our leave, fully resolved that nothing in future shall ever tempt us to break the glass houses of our professional brethren. For what can it matter to us that people should follow the shadow rather than the substance, or that wisdom, knowing the blindness of mankind, should disdain to put on a more substantial appearance?

Towering above most other glass houses is the ostentatious but futile and fragile edifice raised by the wealthy man to conceal his parsimony, and out of which he peers continually, like a snail from its shell, at the slightest opportunity, to show his real nature. We have known a man possessed of hundreds of thousands, and who spared no money in the gratification of his desires, give a cabman sixpence for his drive, and answer Jehu's complaint by telling him it was—abundance. We have known another man who would haggle over the price of every article in the bill of a restaurateur, and yet pay without a murmur the heavy account of the picture-dealer, though we feel sure he derived more pleasure for the twenty-five francs than he ever will obtain for his twenty-five thousand pounds.

The edifice of the parvenu is, of all glass houses, the easiest to penetrate, and gives the least pleasure to its owner. Considering the miseries he undergoes in his assumed character, we wonder how long he can keep up the deception of smacking his lips over the glass of Château-Margaux, when he would prefer the homely gin, and takes it, too, with a "God's blessing," when he reaches his own dwelling. Were it not better, worthy Dives, to sell your carriages and horses, lest, like poor Secretary Craggs, you are caught some day involuntarily taking the place of your own footman? All honour be yours who, by your ability and industry, have raised yourself to a high social position; but, having attained it, do not ape the habits of those who are, as it were, to the manner born. There is room for you in your new station to display your individual virtues, and for the exercise of that power for good which your means enable you to perform so well. But the attempt to imitate the peculiar habits of any class to which you do not belong is mimicry, and, as mimicry, will meet only with ridicule.

You see a man who is always in a state of activity, and who seems miserable if for one moment he has nothing to do. You immediately pronounce him to be a pattern of industry, but you are wrong; break his glass house, and you will see beneath this fluttering outside a mind so torpid, that neither the desire of fame or glory, nor even of wealth, can rouse it to action. We have no sympathy with those restless beings, nor are they ever happy; for though it be true, as Shakspeare says, that there is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; yet, considering the shortness of life,

we are not sure whether the wisest course is not to lay-to at times in some quiet nook, and enjoy the present sunshine. When a rising current of wind be propitious, we can sally out if we are tired of our snug haven, and, though we run the risk of not reaching the goal, we have at least enjoyed some moments of happiness; whereas the constant rover is ever looking for the haven of rest, and, though he passes a hundred choice spots on his course, he goes on ever hoping to find something better, and dies with his restless wishes unfulfilled.

As to those men who "have really so much work on hand that they have not a minute to spare," we confess that we are rather sceptical of their untiring industry. You need not break their glass houses, for the panes are so thin that you can easily see the interior. You may probably perceive a large canvas on an easel, or a library-table covered with sheets of manuscript; and, if you peer further, you will see the inmate playing at pool or at whist with some fellow hard-workers. Heaven forbid that we should deprive him of his amusement, which, within proper limits, will keep the brain in order. We know that at times our friend does work hard, and well too; but he acts on impulse, whilst your real hard-worker is more methodical, and though the latter does not at times pursue his occupation uninterruptedly for several days and nights, yet he ultimately turns out the greatest amount of work.

Glass houses are not regarded as very formidable defences by women, especially those reared by their own sex. The other day we were admiring a lady's dress in the presence of another lady, and we marvelled much at its beautiful colour. "You silly goose," said our fair friend, "can't you see that the silk has been dyed and turned? It would serve men almost right if women ceased the attempt to dress well." We were silenced, but could not help thinking that possibly some men would have no objection at all to be "served quite right." Nothing can well exceed a woman's dexterity in smashing her neighbour's glass house, and the whole proceeding is a marvellous exhibition of ingenuity. Provided with the smallest pebble, but of the highest polish, she will approach her poor sister, and after much fond palaver and kissing of cheeks, she will retire to a short distance. Then, watching her opportunity, crash she sends the little missile with the force and whizz of a bullet. Awhile she watches the agony of her prostrate enemy, and then approaches with the sweetest of smiles to offer her pity and tears. Great God! is it possible that such loveliness and tenderness can at times be allied to a cruelty in the refinement of which no wild animal can surpass the mortal angel?

Of all the keen penetraters into individual glass houses, children are by far the most sagacious. You may attempt to deceive them by bonbons or toys, but they see through you at once, and though they take the presents, they will naively tell you that they "don't like

you." They can't say why, but they don't. We will tell you why. It is instinct. Children are said to be easily pleased, but, "en revanche," they are as easily disgusted; nor do we believe that their want of reason is fatal to the correctness of their decisions. Their likes and dislikes are as the instinct of a dog, which can immediately discover the friend of his species; and the child decides more truly by the heart than the man judges by the head;—all which goes far to prove that as we become, what we are pleased to call, more reasonable, we in truth become the greater dupes.

Let us not dwell on the paltry glass houses reared by Vanity merely to conceal the ravages of Time. Vain are patent hair-dyes, rouge, and henna, for they can no more deceive the spectators than they do the wearers, and only arouse contempt and indignation that men and women should feel ashamed of being no longer boys and girls. Can we wonder,—if age has so little respect for itself,—that it meets with still less reverence from others?

Here for the present we pause, for were we to employ all the precious hours of life in the destruction of glass houses, we should leave thousands still untouched. Moreover, have we not our own huge glass house, erected with much skill and patience, and at an enormous cost? Alas! it has been penetrated ever so often; and no sooner was one pane mended than another was broken, until, weary with the vain attempt of restoring the shattered edifice, we have come to the conclusion to stop up no more holes, but to let the curious and wicked wanderer look in, trusting to the labours of the spider to spin a web over the interstices, and so conceal the musty corners of the interior. Rather let us stay the coming wrath by acknowledging that our own building is as fragile and porous as any in existence.

PHINEAS FINN, THE IRISH MEMBER.

CHAPTER V.

MR. AND MRS. LOW.

That terrible apparition of the red Lord Chiltern had disturbed Phineas in the moment of his happiness as he sat listening to the kind flatteries of Lady Laura; and though Lord Chiltern had vanished as quickly as he had appeared, there had come no return of his joy. Lady Laura had said some word about her brother, and Phineas had replied that he had never chanced to see Lord Chiltern. Then there had been an awkward silence, and almost immediately other persons had come in. After greeting one or two old acquaintances, among whom an elder sister of Laurence Fitzgibbon was one, he took his leave and escaped out into the square. "Miss Fitzgibbon is going to dine with us on Wednesday," said Lady Laura. "She says she won't answer for her brother, but she will bring him if she can."

"And you're a member of Parliament now too, they tell me," said Miss Fitzgibbon, holding up her hands. "I think everybody will be in Parliament before long. I wish I knew some man who wasn't, that I might think of changing my condition."

But Phineas cared very little what Miss Fitzgibbon said to him. Everybody knew Aspasia Fitzgibbon, and all who knew her were accustomed to put up with the violence of her jokes and the bitterness of her remarks. She was an old maid, over forty, very plain, who, having reconciled herself to the fact that she was an old maid, chose to take advantage of such poor privileges as the position gave her. Within the last few years a considerable fortune had fallen into her hands, some twenty-five thousand pounds, which had come to her unexpectedly,—a wonderful windfall. And now she was the only one of her family who had money at command. She lived in a small house by herself, in one of the smallest streets of May Fair, and walked about sturdily by herself, and spoke her mind about every thing. She was greatly devoted to her brother Laurence,—so devoted that there was nothing she would not do for him, short of lending him money.

But Phineas when he found himself out in the square thought nothing of Aspasia Fitzgibbon. He had gone to Lady Laura Standish for sympathy, and she had given it to him in full measure. She understood him and his aspirations if no one else did so on the face of the earth. She rejoiced in his triumph, and was not too hard to tell him

that she looked forward to his success. And in what delightful language she had done so! "Faint heart never won fair lady." It was thus, or almost thus, that she had encouraged him. He knew well that she had in truth meant nothing more than her words had seemed to signify. He did not for a moment attribute to her ought else. But might not he get another lesson from them? He had often told himself that he was not in love with Laura Standish;—but why should he not now tell himself that he was in love with her? Of course there would be difficulty. But was it not the business of his life to overcome difficulties? Had he not already overcome one difficulty almost as great; and why should he be afraid of this other? Faint heart never won fair lady! And this fair lady,—for at this moment he was ready to swear that she was very fair,—was already half won. She could not have taken him by the hand so warmly, and looked into his face so keenly, had she not felt for him something stronger than common friendship.

He had turned down Baker Street from the square, and was now walking towards the Regent's Park. He would go and see the beasts in the Zoological Gardens, and make up his mind as to his future mode of life in that delightful Sunday solitude. There was very much as to which it was necessary that he should make up his mind. If he resolved that he would ask Lady Laura Standish to be his wife, when should he ask her, and in what manner might he propose to her that they should live? It would hardly suit him to postpone his courtship indefinitely, knowing, as he did know, that he would be one among many suitors. He could not expect her to wait for him if he did not declare himself. And yet he could hardly ask her to come and share with him the allowance made to him by his father! Whether she had much fortune of her own, or little, or none at all, he did not in the least know. He did know that the Earl had been distressed by his son's extravagance, and that there had been some money difficulties arising from this source.

But his great desire would be to support his own wife by his own labour. At present he was hardly in a fair way to do that, unless he could get paid for his parliamentary work. Those fortunate gentlemen who form "The Government" are so paid. Yes;—there was the Treasury Bench open to him, and he must resolve that he would seat himself there. He would make Lady Laura understand this, and then he would ask his question. It was true that at present his political opponents had possession of the Treasury Bench;—but all governments are mortal, and Conservative governments in this country are especially prone to die. It was true that he could not hold even a Treasury lordship with a poor thousand a-year for his salary without having to face the electors of Loughshane again before he entered upon the enjoyment of his place;—but if he could only do something to give a grace to his name, to show that he was a rising man, the elec-

tors of Loughshane, who had once been so easy with him, would surely not be cruel to him when he showed himself a second time among them. Lord Tulla was his friend, and he had those points of law in his favour which possession bestows. And then he remembered that Lady Laura was related to almost everybody who was anybody among the high Whigs. She was, he knew, second cousin to Mr. Mildmay, who for years had been the leader of the Whigs, and was third cousin to Barrington Erle. The late President of the Council, the Duke of St. Bungay, and Lord Brentford had married sisters, and the St. Bungay people, and the Mildmay people, and the Brentford people had all some sort of connection with the Palliser people, of whom the heir and coming chief, Plantagenet Palliser, would certainly be Chancellor of the Exchequer in the next Government. Simply as an introduction into official life nothing could be more conducive to chances of success than a matrimonial alliance with Lady Laura. Not that he would have thought of such a thing on that account! No;—he thought of it because he loved her; honestly because he loved her. He swore to that half a dozen times, for his own satisfaction. But, loving her as he did, and resolving that in spite of all difficulties she should become his wife, there could be no reason why he should not,—on her account as well as on his own,—take advantage of any circumstances that there might be in his favour.

As he wandered among the unsavoury beasts, elbowed on every side by the Sunday visitors to the garden, he made up his mind that he would first let Lady Laura understand what were his intentions with regard to his future career, and that then he would ask her to join her lot to his. At every turn the chances would of course be very much against him;—ten to one against him, perhaps, on every point; but it was his lot in life to have to face such odds. Twelve months since it had been much more than ten to one against his getting into Parliament; and yet he was there. He expected to be blown into fragments,—to sheep-skinning in Australia, or packing preserved meats on the plains of Paraguay; but when the blowing into atoms should come, he was resolved that courage to bear the ruin should not be wanting. Then he quoted a line or two of a Latin poet, and felt himself to be comfortable.

"So, here you are again, Mr. Finn," said a voice in his ear.

"Yes, Miss Fitzgibbon; here I am again."

"I fancied you members of Parliament had something else to do besides looking at wild beasts. I thought you always spent Sunday in arranging how you might most effectually badger each other on Monday."

"We got through all that early this morning, Miss Fitzgibbon, while you were saying your prayers."

"Here is Mr. Kennedy too;—you know him I daresay. He also is a member; but then he can afford to be idle." But it so happened

that Phineas did not know Mr. Kennedy, and consequently there was some slight form of introduction.

"I believe I am to meet you at dinner on Wednesday,"—said Phineas,—"at Lord Brentford's."

"And me too," said Miss Fitzgibbon.

"Which will be the greatest possible addition to our pleasure," said Phineas.

Mr. Kennedy, who seemed to be afflicted with some difficulty in speaking, and whose bow to our hero had hardly done more than produce the slightest possible motion to the top of his hat, hereupon muttered something which was taken to mean an assent to the proposition as to Wednesday's dinner. Then he stood perfectly still, with his two hands fixed on the top of his umbrella, and gazed at the great monkeys' cage. But it was clear that he was not looking at any special monkey, for his eyes never wandered.

"Did you ever see such a contrast in your life," said Miss Fitzgibbon to Phineas,—hardly in a whisper.

"Between what?" said Phineas.

"Between Mr. Kennedy and a monkey. The monkey has so much to say for himself, and is so delightfully wicked! I don't suppose that Mr. Kennedy ever did anything wrong in his life."

Mr. Kennedy was a man who had very little temptation to do anything wrong. He was possessed of over a million and a half of money, which he was mistaken enough to suppose he had made himself; whereas it may be doubted whether he had ever earned a penny. His father and his uncle had created a business in Glasgow, and that business now belonged to him. But his father and his uncle, who had toiled through their long lives, had left behind them servants who understood the work, and the business now went on prospering almost by its own momentum. The Mr. Kennedy of the present day, the sole owner of the business, though he did occasionally go to Glasgow, certainly did nothing towards maintaining it. He had a magnificent place in Perthshire, called Loughlinter, and he sat for a Scotch group of boroughs, and he had a house in London, and a stud of horses in Leicestershire, which he rarely visited, and was unmarried. He never spoke much to any one, although he was constantly in society. He rarely did anything, although he had the means of doing everything. He had very seldom been on his legs in the House of Commons, though he had sat there for ten years. He was seen about everywhere, sometimes with one acquaintance and sometimes with another;—but it may be doubted whether he had any friend. It may be doubted whether he had ever talked enough to any man to make that man his friend. Laurence Fitzgibbon tried him for one season, and after a month or two asked for a loan of a few hundred pounds. "I never lend money to any one under any circumstances," said Mr. Kennedy, and it was the longest speech which had ever fallen from

his mouth in the hearing of Laurence Fitzgibbon. But though he would not lend money, he gave a great deal,—and he would give it for almost every object. "Mr. Robert Kennedy, M.P., Loughlinter, £105," appeared on almost every charitable list that was advertised. No one ever spoke to him as to this expenditure, nor did he ever speak to any one. Circulars came to him and the cheques were returned. The duty was a very easy one to him, and he performed it willingly. Had any amount of inquiry been necessary, it is possible that the labour would have been too much for him. Such was Mr. Robert Kennedy, as to whom Phineas had heard that he had during the last winter entertained Lord Brentford and Lady Laura, with very many other people of note, at his place in Perthshire.

"I very much prefer the monkey," said Phineas to Miss Fitzgibbon.

"I thought you would," said she. "Like to like, you know. You have both of you the same aptitude for climbing. But the monkeys never fall, they tell me."

Phineas, knowing that he could gain nothing by sparring with Miss Fitzgibbon, raised his hat and took his leave. Going out of a narrow gate he found himself again brought into contact with Mr. Kennedy. "What a crowd there is here," he said, finding himself bound to say something. Mr. Kennedy, who was behind him, answered him not a word. Then Phineas made up his mind that Mr. Kennedy was insolent with the insolence of riches, and that he would hate Mr. Kennedy.

He was engaged to dine on this Sunday with Mr. Low, the barrister, with whom he had been reading for the last three years. Mr. Low had taken a strong liking to Phineas, as had also Mrs. Low, and the tutor had more than once told his pupil that success in his profession was certainly open to him if he would only stick to his work. Mr. Low was himself an ambitious man, looking forward to entering Parliament at some future time, when the exigencies of his life of labour might enable him to do so; but he was prudent, given to close calculation, and resolved to make the ground sure beneath his feet in every step that he took forward. When he first heard that Finn intended to stand for Loughshane he was stricken with dismay, and strongly dissuaded him. "The electors may probably reject him. That's his only chance now," Mr. Low had said to his wife, when he found that Phineas was, as he thought, foolhardy. But the electors of Loughshane had not rejected Mr. Low's pupil, and Mr. Low was now called upon to advise what Phineas should do in his present circumstances. There is nothing to prevent the work of a Chancery barrister being done by a member of Parliament. Indeed, the most successful barristers are members of Parliament. But Phineas Finn was beginning at the wrong end, and Mr. Low knew that no good would come of it.

"Only think of your being in Parliament, Mr. Finn," said Mrs. Low.

"It is wonderful, isn't it?" said Phineas.

"It took us so much by surprise!" said Mrs. Low. "As a rule one never hears of a barrister going into Parliament till after he's forty."

"And I'm only twenty-five. I do feel that I've disgraced myself. I do, indeed, Mrs. Low."

"No;—you've not disgraced yourself, Mr. Finn. The only question is, whether it's prudent. I hope it will all turn out for the best, most heartily." Mrs. Low was a very matter-of-fact lady, four or five years older than her husband, who had had a little money of her own, and was possessed of every virtue under the sun. Nevertheless she did not quite like the idea of her husband's pupil having got into Parliament. If her husband and Phineas Finn were dining anywhere together, Phineas, who had come to them quite a boy, would walk out of the room before her husband. This could hardly be right! Nevertheless she helped Phineas to the nicest bit of fish she could find, and had he been ill, would have nursed him with the greatest care.

After dinner, when Mrs. Low had gone upstairs, there came the great discussion between the tutor and the pupil, for the sake of which this little dinner had been given. When Phineas had last been with Mr. Low,—on the occasion of his showing himself at his tutor's chambers after his return from Ireland,—he had not made up his mind so thoroughly on certain points as he had done since he had seen Lady Laura. The discussion could hardly be of any avail now,—but it could not be avoided.

"Well, Phineas, and what do you mean to do?" said Mr. Low. Everybody who knew our hero, or nearly everybody, called him by his Christian name. There are men who seem to be so treated by general consent in all societies. Even Mrs. Low, who was very prosaic, and unlikely to be familiar in her mode of address, had fallen into the way of doing it before the election. But she had dropped it, when the Phineas whom she used to know became a member of Parliament.

"That's the question;—isn't it?" said Phineas.

"Of course you'll stick to your work?"

"What;—to the Bar?"

"Yes;—to the Bar."

"I am not thinking of giving it up permanently."

"Giving it up," said Mr. Low, raising his hands in surprise. "If you give it up, how do you intend to live? Men are not paid for being members of Parliament."

"Not exactly. But, as I said before, I am not thinking of giving it up,—permanently."

"You mustn't give it up at all,—not for a day; that is, if you ever mean to do any good."

"There I think that perhaps you may be wrong, Low!"

"How can I be wrong? Did a period of idleness ever help a man

in any profession? And is it not acknowledged by all who know anything about it, that continuous labour is more necessary in our profession than in any other?"

"I do not mean to be idle."

"What is it you do mean, Phineas?"

"Why simply this. Here I am in Parliament. We must take that as fact."

"I don't doubt the fact."

"And if it be a misfortune, we must make the best of it. Even you wouldn't advise me to apply for the Chiltern Hundreds at once."

"I would;—to-morrow. My dear fellow, though I do not like to give you pain, if you come to me I can only tell you what I think. My advice to you is to give it up to-morrow. Men would laugh at you for a few weeks, but that is better than being ruined for life."

"I can't do that," said Phineas, sadly.

"Very well;—then let us go on," said Mr. Low. "If you won't give up your seat, the next best thing will be to take care that it shall interfere as little as possible with your work. I suppose you must sit upon some Committees."

"My idea is this,—that I will give up one year to learning the practices of the House."

"And do nothing?"

"Nothing but that. Why, the thing is a study in itself. As for learning it in a year, that is out of the question. But I am convinced that if a man intends to be a useful member of Parliament, he should make a study of it."

"And how do you mean to live in the meantime?" Mr. Low, who was an energetic man, had assumed almost an angry tone of voice. Phineas for a while sat silent;—not that he felt himself to be without words for a reply, but that he was thinking in what fewest words he might best convey his ideas. "You have a very modest allowance from your father, on which you have never been able to keep yourself free from debt," continued Mr. Low.

"He has increased it."

"And will it satisfy you to live here, in what will turn out to be parliamentary club idleness, on the savings of his industrious life? I think you will find yourself unhappy if you do that. Phineas, my dear fellow, as far as I have as yet been able to see the world, men don't begin either very good or very bad. They have generally good aspirations with infirm purposes;—or, as we may say, strong bodies with weak legs to carry them. Then, because their legs are weak, they drift into idleness and ruin. During all this drifting they are wretched, and when they have thoroughly drifted, they are still wretched. The agony of their old disappointment still clings to them. In nine cases out of ten it is some one small unfortunate event that puts a man astray at first. He sees some woman and loses himself

with her;—or he is taken to a racecourse and unluckily wins money;—or some devil in the shape of a friend lures him to tobacco and brandy. Your temptation has come in the shape of this accursed seat in Parliament." Mr. Low had never said a soft word in his life to any woman but the wife of his bosom, had never seen a racehorse, always confined himself to two glasses of port after dinner, and looked upon smoking as the darkest of all the vices.

"You have made up your mind, then, that I mean to be idle?"

"I have made up my mind that your time will be wholly unprofitable,—if you do as you say you intend to do."

"But you do not know my plan;—just listen to me." Then Mr. Low did listen, and Phineas explained his plan,—saying, of course, nothing of his love for Lady Laura, but giving Mr. Low to understand that he intended to assist in turning out the existing Government and to mount up to some seat,—a humble seat at first,—on the Treasury bench, by the help of his exalted friends and by the use of his own gifts of eloquence. Mr. Low heard him without a word. "Of course," said Phineas, "after the first year my time will not be fully employed, unless I succeed. And if I fail totally,—for, of course, I may fail altogether——"

"It is possible," said Mr. Low.

"If you are resolved to turn yourself against me, I must not say another word," said Phineas, with anger.

"Turn myself against you! I would turn myself any way so that I might save you from the sort of life which you are preparing for yourself. I see nothing in it that can satisfy any manly heart. Even if you are successful, what are you to become? You will be the creature of some minister; not his colleague. You are to make your way up the ladder by pretending to agree whenever agreement is demanded from you, and by voting whether you agree or do not. And what is to be your reward? Some few precarious hundreds a year, lasting just so long as a party may remain in power and you can retain a seat in Parliament! It is at the best slavery and degradation,—even if you are lucky enough to achieve the slavery."

"You yourself hope to go into Parliament and join a ministry some day," said Phineas.

Mr. Low was not quick to answer, but he did answer at last. "That is true, though I have never told you so. Indeed, it is hardly true to say that I hope it. I have my dreams, and sometimes dare to tell myself that they may possibly become waking facts. But if ever I sit on a Treasury bench I shall sit there by special invitation, having been summoned to take a high place because of my professional success. It is but a dream after all, and I would not have you repeat what I have said to any one. I had no intention to talk about myself."

"I am sure that you will succeed," said Phineas.

"Yes;—I shall succeed. I am succeeding. I live upon what I

earn, like a gentleman, and can already afford to be indifferent to work that I dislike. After all, the other part of it,—that of which I dream,—is but an unnecessary adjunct; the gilding on the gingerbread. I am inclined to think that the cake is more wholesome without it."

Phineas did not go upstairs into Mrs. Low's drawing-room on that evening, nor did he stay very late with Mr. Low. He had heard enough of counsel to make him very unhappy,—to shake from him much of the audacity which he had acquired for himself during his morning's walk,—and to make him almost doubt whether, after all, the Chiltern Hundreds would not be for him the safest escape from his difficulties. But in that case he must never venture to see Lady Laura Standish again.

CHAPTER VI.

LORD BRENTFORD'S DINNER.

No;—in such case as that,—should he resolve upon taking the advice of his old friend Mr. Low, Phineas Finn must make up his mind never to see Lady Laura Standish again! And he was in love with Lady Laura Standish;—and, for aught he knew, Lady Laura Standish might be in love with him. As he walked home from Mr. Low's house in Bedford Square, he was by no means a triumphant man. There had been much more said between him and Mr. Low than could be laid before the reader in the last chapter. Mr. Low had urged him again and again, and had prevailed so far that Phineas, before he left the house, had promised to consider that suicidal expedient of the Chiltern Hundreds. What a by-word he would become if he were to give up Parliament, having sat there for about a week. But such immediate giving up was one of the necessities of Mr. Low's programme. According to Mr. Low's teaching, a single year passed amidst the miasma of the House of Commons would be altogether fatal to any chance of professional success. And Mr. Low had at any rate succeeded in making Phineas believe that he was right in this lesson. There was his profession, as to which Mr. Low assured him that success was within his reach; and there was Parliament on the other side, as to which he knew that the chances were all against him, in spite of his advantage of a seat. That he could not combine the two, beginning with Parliament, he did believe. Which should it be? That was the question which he tried to decide as he walked home from Bedford Square to Great Marlborough Street. He could not answer the question satisfactorily, and went to bed an unhappy man.

He must at any rate go to Lord Brentford's dinner on Wednesday, and, to enable him to join in the conversation there, must attend the debates on Monday and Tuesday. The reader may perhaps be best made to understand how terrible was our hero's state of doubt by

being told that for awhile he thought of absenting himself from these debates, as being likely to weaken his purpose of withdrawing altogether from the House. It is not very often that so strong a fury rages between party and party at the commencement of the session that a division is taken upon the Address. It is customary for the leader of the opposition on such occasions to express his opinion in the most courteous language, that his right honourable friend, sitting opposite to him on the Treasury bench, has been, is, and will be wrong in everything that he thinks, says, or does in public life; but that, as anything like factious opposition is never adopted on that side of the House, the Address to the Queen, in answer to that most fatuous speech which has been put into her Majesty's gracious mouth, shall be allowed to pass unquestioned. Then the leader of the House thanks his adversary for his consideration, explains to all men how happy the country ought to be that the Government has not fallen into the disgracefully incapable hands of his right honourable friend opposite; and after that the Address is carried amidst universal serenity. But such was not the order of the day on the present occasion. Mr. Mildmay, the veteran leader of the liberal side of the House, had moved an amendment to the Address, and had urged upon the House, in very strong language, the expediency of showing, at the very commencement of the session, that the country had returned to Parliament a strong majority determined not to put up with Conservative inactivity. "I conceive it to be my duty," Mr. Mildmay had said, "at once to assume that the country is unwilling that the right honourable gentlemen opposite should keep their seats on the bench upon which they sit, and in the performance of that duty I am called upon to divide the House upon the Address to her Majesty." And if Mr. Mildmay used strong language, the reader may be sure that Mr. Mildmay's followers used language much stronger. And Mr. Daubeny, who was the present leader of the House, and representative there of the Ministry,—Lord De Terrier, the Premier, sitting in the House of Lords,—was not the man to allow these amenities to pass by without adequate replies. He and his friends were very strong in sarcasm, if they failed in argument, and lacked nothing for words, though it might perhaps be proved that they were short in numbers. It was considered that the speech in which Mr. Daubeny reviewed the long political life of Mr. Mildmay, and showed that Mr. Mildmay had been at one time a bugbear, and then a nightmare, and latterly simply a fungus, was one of the severest attacks, if not the most severe, that had been heard in that House since the Reform Bill. Mr. Mildmay, the while, was sitting with his hat low down over his eyes, and many men said that he did not like it. But this speech was not made till after that dinner at Lord Brentford's, of which a short account must be given.

Had it not been for the overwhelming interest of the doings in

Parliament at the commencement of the session, Phineas might have perhaps abstained from attending, in spite of the charm of novelty. For, in truth, Mr. Low's words had moved him much. But if it was to be his fate to be a member of Parliament only for ten days, surely it would be well that he should take advantage of the time to hear such a debate as this. It would be a thing to talk of to his children in twenty years' time, or to his grandchildren in fifty;—and it would be essentially necessary that he should be able to talk of it to Lady Laura Standish. He did, therefore, sit in the House till one on the Monday night, and till two on the Tuesday night, and heard the debate adjourned till the Thursday. On the Thursday Mr. Daubeny was to make his great speech, and then the division would come.

When Phineas entered Lady Laura's drawing-room on the Wednesday before dinner, he found the other guests all assembled. Why men should have been earlier in keeping their dinner engagements on that day than on any other he did not understand; but it was the fact, probably, that the great anxiety of the time made those who were at all concerned in the matter very keen to hear and to be heard. During these days everybody was in a hurry,—everybody was eager; and there was a common feeling that not a minute was to be lost. There were three ladies in the room,—Lady Laura, Miss Fitzgibbon, and Mrs. Bonteen. The latter was the wife of a gentleman who had been a former Lord of the Admiralty in the late Government, and who lived in the expectation of filling, perhaps, some higher office in the government which, as he hoped, was soon to be called into existence. There were five gentlemen besides Phineas Finn himself,—Mr. Bonteen, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Fitzgibbon, Barrington Erle, who had been caught in spite of all that Lady Laura had said as to the difficulty of such an operation, and Lord Brentford. Phineas was quick to observe that every male guest was in Parliament, and to tell himself that he would not have been there unless he also had had a seat.

"We are all here now," said the Earl, ringing the bell.

"I hope I've not kept you waiting," said Phineas.

"Not at all," said Lady Laura. "I do not know why we are in such a hurry. And how many do you say it will be, Mr. Finn?"

"Seventeen, I suppose," said Phineas.

"More likely twenty-two," said Mr. Bonteen. "There is Colcleugh so ill they can't possibly bring him up, and young Rochester is at Vienna, and Gunning is sulking about something, and Moody has lost his eldest son. By George! they pressed him to come up, although Frank Moody won't be buried till Friday."

"I don't believe it," said Lord Brentford.

"You ask some of the Carlton fellows, and they'll own it."

"If I'd lost every relation I had in the world," said Fitzgibbon,

"I'd vote on such a question as this. Staying away won't bring poor Frank Moody back to life."

"But there's a decency in these matters, is there not, Mr. Fitzgibbon?" said Lady Laura.

"I thought they had thrown all that kind of thing overboard long ago," said Miss Fitzgibbon. "It would be better that they should have no veil, than squabble about the thickness of it."

Then dinner was announced. The Earl walked off with Miss Fitzgibbon, Barrington Erle took Mrs. Bonteen, and Mr. Fitzgibbon took Lady Laura.

"I'll bet four pounds to two it's over nineteen," said Mr. Bonteen, as he passed through the drawing-room door. The remark seemed to have been addressed to Mr. Kennedy, and Phineas therefore made no reply.

"I daresay it will," said Kennedy, "but I never bet."

"But you vote,—sometimes, I hope," said Bonteen.

"Sometimes," said Mr. Kennedy.

"I think he is the most odious man that ever I set my eyes on," said Phineas to himself as he followed Mr. Kennedy into the dining-room. He had observed that Mr. Kennedy had been standing very near to Lady Laura in the drawing-room, and that Lady Laura had said a few words to him. He was more determined than ever that he would hate Mr. Kennedy, and would probably have been moody and unhappy throughout the whole dinner had not Lady Laura called him to a chair at her left hand. It was very generous of her; and the more so, as Mr. Kennedy had, in a half-hesitating manner, prepared to seat himself in that very place. As it was, Phineas and Mr. Kennedy were neighbours, but Phineas had the place of honour.

"I suppose you will not speak during the debate?" said Lady Laura.

"Who? I? Certainly not. In the first place, I could not get a hearing, and, in the next place, I should not think of commencing on such an occasion. I do not know that I shall ever speak at all."

"Indeed you will. You are just the sort of man who will succeed with the House. What I doubt is, whether you will do as well in office."

"I wish I might have the chance."

"Of course you can have the chance if you try for it. Beginning so early, and being on the right side,—and, if you will allow me to say so, among the right set,—there can be no doubt that you may take office if you will. But I am not sure that you will be tractable. You cannot begin, you know, by being Prime Minister."

"I have seen enough to realise that already," said Phineas.

"If you will only keep that little fact steadily before your eyes, there is nothing you may not reach in official life. But Pitt was Prime Minister at four-and-twenty, and that precedent has ruined half our young politicians."

"It has not affected me, Lady Laura."

"As far as I can see, there is no great difficulty in government. A man must learn to have words at command when he is upon his legs in the House of Commons, in the same way as he would if he were talking to his own servants. He must keep his temper; and he must be very patient. As far as I have seen Cabinet Ministers, they are not more clever than other people."

"I think there are generally one or two men of ability in the Cabinet."

"Yes, of fair ability. Mr. Mildmay is a good specimen. There is not, and never was, anything brilliant in him. He is not eloquent, nor, as far as I am aware, did he ever create anything. But he has always been a steady, honest, persevering man, and circumstances have made politics come easy to him."

"Think of the momentous questions which he has been called upon to decide," said Phineas.

"Every question so handled by him has been decided rightly according to his own party, and wrongly according to the party opposite. A political leader is so sure of support and so sure of attack, that it is hardly necessary for him to be even anxious to be right. For the country's sake, he should have officials under him who know the routine of business."

"You think very badly then of politics as a profession."

"No; I think of them very highly. It must be better to deal with the repealing of laws than the defending of criminals. But all this is papa's wisdom, not mine. Papa has never been in the Cabinet yet, and therefore of course he is a little caustic."

"I think he was quite right," said Barrington Erle stoutly. He spoke so stoutly that everybody at the table listened to him.

"I don't exactly see the necessity for such internecine war just at present," said Lord Brentford.

"I must say I do," said the other. "Lord De Terrier took office knowing that he was in a minority. We had a fair majority of nearly thirty when he came in."

"Then how very soft you must have been to go out," said Miss Fitzgibbon.

"Not in the least soft," continued Barrington Erle. "We could not command our men, and were bound to go out. For aught we know, some score of them might have chosen to support Lord De Terrier, and then we should have owned ourselves beaten for the time."

"You were beaten,—hollow," said Miss Fitzgibbon.

"Then why did Lord De Terrier dissolve?"

"A Prime Minister is quite right to dissolve in such a position," said Lord Brentford. "He must do so for the Queen's sake. It is his only chance."

"Just so. It is, as you say, his only chance, and it is his right. His very possession of power will give him near a score of votes, and if he thinks that he has a chance, let him try it. We maintain that he had no chance, and that he must have known that he had none;—that if he could not get on with the late House, he certainly could not get on with a new House. We let him have his own way as far as we could in February. We had failed last summer, and if he could get along he was welcome. But he could not get along."

"I must say I think he was right to dissolve," said Lady Laura.

"And we are right to force the consequences upon him as quickly as we can. He practically lost nine seats by his dissolution. Look at Loughshane."

"Yes; look at Loughshane," said Miss Fitzgibbon. "The country at any rate has gained something there."

"It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good, Mr. Finn," said the Earl.

"What on earth is to become of poor George?" said Mr. Fitzgibbon, "I wonder whether any one knows where he is. George wasn't a bad sort of fellow."

"Roby used to think that he was a very bad fellow," said Mr. Bonteen. "Roby used to swear that it was hopeless trying to catch him." It may be as well to explain that Mr. Roby was a Conservative gentlemen of great fame who had for years acted as Whip under Mr. Daubeny, and who now filled the high office of Patronage Secretary to the Treasury. "I believe in my heart," continued Mr. Bonteen, "that Roby is rejoiced that poor George Morris should be out in the cold."

"If seats were halveable, he should share mine, for the sake of auld lang syne," said Laurence Fitzgibbon.

"But not to-morrow night," said Barrington Erle; "the division to-morrow will be a thing not to be joked with. Upon my word I think they're right about old Moody. All private considerations should give way. And as for Gunning, I'd have him up or I'd know the reason why."

"And shall we have no defaulters, Barrington?" asked Lady Laura.

"I'm not going to boast, but I don't know of one for whom we need blush. Sir Everard Powell is so bad with gout that he can't even bear any one to look at him, but Ratler says that he'll bring him up." Mr. Ratler was in those days the Whip on the liberal side of the House.

"Unfortunate wretch!" said Miss Fitzgibbon.

"The worst of it is that he screams in his paroxysms," said Mr. Bonteen.

"And you mean to say that you'll take him into the lobby," said Lady Laura.

"Undoubtedly," said Barrington Erle. "Why not? He has no business with a seat if he can't vote. But Sir Everard is a good man, and he'll be there if laudanum and bath-chair make it possible."

The same kind of conversation went on during the whole of dinner, and became, if anything, more animated when the three ladies had left the room. Mr. Kennedy made but one remark, and then he observed that as far as he could see a majority of nineteen would be as serviceable as a majority of twenty. This he said in a very mild voice, and in a tone that was intended to be expressive of doubt; but in spite of his humility Barrington Erle flew at him almost savagely,—as though a liberal member of the House of Commons was disgraced by so mean a spirit; and Phineas found himself despising the man for his want of zeal.

"If we are to beat them, let us beat them well," said Phineas.

"Let there be no doubt about it," said Barrington Erle.

"I should like to see every man with a seat polled," said Bonteen.

"Poor Sir Everard!" said Lord Brentford. "It will kill him, no doubt, but I suppose the seat is safe."

"Oh, yes; Llanwrwsth is quite safe," said Barrington, in his eagerness omitting to catch Lord Brentford's grim joke.

Phineas went up into the drawing-room for a few minutes after dinner, and was eagerly desirous of saying a few more words,—he knew not what words,—to Lady Laura. Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Bonteen had left the dining-room first, and Phineas again found Mr. Kennedy standing close to Lady Laura's shoulder. Could it be possible that there was anything in it? Mr. Kennedy was an unmarried man, with an immense fortune, a magnificent place, a seat in Parliament, and was not perhaps above forty years of age. There could be no reason why he should not ask Lady Laura to be his wife,—except, indeed, that he did not seem to have sufficient words at command to ask anybody for anything. But could it be that such a woman as Lady Laura could accept such a man as Mr. Kennedy because of his wealth, and because of his fine place,—a man who had not a word to throw to a dog, who did not seem to be possessed of an idea, who hardly looked like a gentleman;—so Phineas told himself. But in truth Mr. Kennedy, though he was a plain, unattractive man, with nothing in his personal appearance to call for remark, was not unlike a gentleman in his usual demeanour. Phineas himself, it may be here said, was six feet high, and very handsome, with bright blue eyes, and brown wavy hair, and light silken beard. Mrs. Low had told her husband more than once that he was much too handsome to do any good. Mr. Low, however, had replied that young Finn had never shown himself to be conscious of his own personal advantages. "He'll learn it soon enough," said Mrs. Low. "Some woman will tell him, and then he'll be spoilt." I do not think that Phineas depended much as yet on his own good looks, but he felt that Mr.

"You don't quite know Mr. Kennedy yet."

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Kennedy ought to be despised by such a one as Lady Laura Standish, because his looks were not good. And she must despise him! It could not be that a woman so full of life should be willing to put up with a man who absolutely seemed to have no life within him. And yet why was he there, and why was he allowed to hang about just over her shoulders? Phineas Finn began to feel himself to be an injured man.

But Lady Laura had the power of dispelling instantly this sense of injury. She had done it effectually in the dining-room by calling him to the seat by her side, to the express exclusion of the millionaire, and she did it again now by walking away from Mr. Kennedy to the spot on which Phineas had placed himself somewhat sulkily.

"Of course you'll be at the club on Friday morning after the division," she said.

"No doubt."

"When you leave it, come and tell me what are your impressions, and what you think of Mr. Daubeny's speech. There'll be nothing done in the House before four, and you'll be able to run up to me."

"Certainly I will."

"I have asked Mr. Kennedy to come, and Mr. Fitzgibbon. I am so anxious about it, that I want to hear what different people say. You know, perhaps, that papa is to be in the Cabinet if there's a change."

"Is he indeed?"

"Oh, yes;—and you'll come up?"

"Of course I will. Do you expect to hear much of an opinion from Mr. Kennedy?"

"Yes I do. You don't quite know Mr. Kennedy yet. And you must remember that he will say more to me than he will to you. He's not quick, you know, as you are, and has no enthusiasm on any subject;—but he has opinions, and sound opinions too." Phineas felt that Lady Laura was in a slight degree scolding him for the disrespectful manner in which he had spoken of Mr. Kennedy; and he felt also that he had committed himself,—that he had shown himself to be sore, and that she had seen and understood his soreness.

"The truth is I do not know him," said he, trying to correct his blunder.

"No;—not as yet. But I hope that you may some day, as he is one of those men who are both useful and estimable."

"I do not know that I can use him," said Phineas; "but, if you wish it, I will endeavour to esteem him."

"I wish you to do both;—but that will all come in due time. I think it probable that in the early autumn there will be a great gathering of the real Whig Liberals at Loughlinter;—of those, I mean, who have their heart in it, and are at the same time gentlemen. If it is so, I should be sorry that you should not be there. You need not

mention it, but Mr. Kennedy has just said a word about it to papa, and a word from him always means so much! Well;—good-night; and mind you come up on Friday. You are going to the club now, of course. I envy you men your clubs more than I do the House;—though I feel that a woman's life is only half a life, as she cannot have a seat in Parliament."

Then Phineas went away, and walked down to Pall Mall with Laurence Fitzgibbon. He would have preferred to take his walk alone, but he could not get rid of his affectionate countryman. He wanted to think over what had taken place during the evening; and, indeed, he did do so in spite of his friend's conversation. Lady Laura, when she first saw him after his return to London, had told him how anxious her father was to congratulate him on his seat, but the Earl had not spoken a word to him on the subject. The Earl had been courteous, as hosts customarily are, but had been in no way specially kind to him. And then Mr. Kennedy! As to going to Loughlinter, he would not do such a thing,—not though the success of the liberal party were to depend on it. He declared to himself that there were some things which a man could not do. But although he was not altogether satisfied with what had occurred in Portman Square, he felt as he walked down arm-in-arm with Fitzgibbon that Mr. Low and Mr. Low's counsels must be scattered to the winds. He had thrown the die in consenting to stand for Loughshane, and must stand the hazard of the cast.

"Bedad, Phin, my boy, I don't think you're listening to me at all," said Laurence Fitzgibbon.

"I'm listening to every word you say," said Phineas.

"And if I have to go down to the ould country again this session, you'll go with me?"

"If I can I will."

"That's my boy! And it's I that hope you'll have the chance. What's the good of turning these fellows out if one isn't to get something for one's trouble?"

CHAPTER VII.

MR. AND MRS. BUNCE.

It was three o'clock on the Thursday night before Mr. Daubeny's speech was finished. I do not think that there was any truth in the allegation made at the time, that he continued on his legs an hour longer than the necessities of his speech required, in order that five or six very ancient Whigs might be wearied out and shrink to their beds. Let a Whig have been ever so ancient and ever so weary, he would not have been allowed to depart from Westminster Hall that night. Sir Everard Powell was there in his bath-chair at twelve,

with a doctor on one side of him and a friend on the other, in some purlieu of the House, and did his duty like a fine old Briton as he was. That speech of Mr. Daubeny's will never be forgotten by any one who heard it. Its studied bitterness had perhaps never been equalled, and yet not a word was uttered for the saying of which he could be accused of going beyond the limits of parliamentary antagonism. It is true that personalities could not have been closer, that accusations of political dishonesty and of almost worse than political cowardice and falsehood could not have been clearer, that no words in the language could have attributed meaner motives or more unscrupulous conduct. But, nevertheless, Mr. Daubeny in all that he said was parliamentary, and showed himself to be a gladiator thoroughly well trained for the arena in which he had descended to the combat. His arrows were poisoned, and his lance was barbed, and his shot was heated red,—because such things are allowed. He did not poison his enemies' wells or use Greek fire, because those things are not allowed. He knew exactly the rules of the combat. Mr. Mildmay sat and heard him without once raising his hat from his brow, or speaking a word to his neighbour. Men on both sides of the House said that Mr. Mildmay suffered terribly; but as Mr. Mildmay uttered no word of complaint to any one, and was quite ready to take Mr. Daubeny by the hand the next time they met in company, I do not know that any one was able to form a true idea of Mr. Mildmay's feelings. Mr. Mildmay was an impassive man who rarely spoke of his own feelings, and no doubt sat with his hat low down over his eyes in order that no man might judge of them on that occasion by the impression on his features. "If he could have left off half an hour earlier it would have been perfect as an attack," said Barrington Erle in criticising Mr. Daubeny's speech, "but he allowed himself to sink into comparative weakness, and the glory of it was over before the end."—Then came the division. The Liberals had 333 votes to 314 for the Conservatives, and therefore counted a majority of 19. It was said that so large a number of members had never before voted at any division.

"I own I'm disappointed," said Barrington Erle to Mr. Ratler.

"I thought there would be twenty," said Mr. Ratler. "I never went beyond that. I knew they would have old Moody up, but I thought Gunning would have been too hard for them."

"They say they've promised them both peerages."

"Yes;—if they remain in. But they know they're going out."

"They must go, with such a majority against them," said Barrington Erle.

"Of course they must," said Mr. Ratler. "Lord De Terrier wants nothing better, but it is rather hard upon poor Daubeny. I never saw such an unfortunate old Tantalus."

"He gets a good drop of real water now and again, and I don't pity

him in the least. He's clever of course, and has made his own way, but I've always a feeling that he has no business where he is. I suppose we shall know all about it at Brooks's by one o'clock to-morrow."

Phineas, though it had been past five before he went to bed,—for there had been much triumphant talking to be done among liberal members after the division,—was up at his breakfast at Mrs. Bunce's lodgings by nine. There was a matter which he was called upon to settle immediately in which Mrs. Bunce herself was much interested, and respecting which he had promised to give an answer on this very morning. A set of very dingy chambers up two pairs of stairs at No. 9, Old Square, Lincoln's Inn, to which Mr. Low had recommended him to transfer himself and all his belongings, were waiting his occupation, should he resolve upon occupying them. If he intended to commence operations as a barrister, it would be necessary that he should have chambers and a clerk; and before he had left Mr. Low's house on Sunday evening he had almost given that gentleman authority to secure for him these rooms at No. 9. "Whether you remain in Parliament or no, you must make a beginning," Mr. Low had said; "and how are you ever to pretend to begin if you don't have chambers?" Mr. Low hoped that he might be able to wean Phineas away from his Parliament bauble;—that he might induce the young barrister to give up his madness, if not this session or the next, at any rate before a third year had commenced. Mr. Low was a persistent man, liking very much when he did like, and loving very strongly when he did love. He would have many a tug for Phineas Finn before he would allow that false Westminster Satan to carry off the prey as altogether his own. If he could only get Phineas into the dingy chambers he might do much!

But Phineas had now become so imbued with the atmosphere of politics, had been so breathed upon by Lady Laura and Barrington Erle, that he could no longer endure the thought of any other life than that of a life spent among the lobbies. A desire to help to beat the Conservatives had fastened on his very soul, and almost made Mr. Low odious in his eyes. He was afraid of Mr. Low, and for the nonce would not go to him any more;—but he must see the porter at Lincoln's Inn, he must write a line to Mr. Low, and he must tell Mrs. Bunce that for the present he would still keep on her rooms. His letter to Mr. Low was as follows:—

"*Great Marlborough Street, May*, 186—.

"My dear Low,

"I have made up my mind against taking the chambers, and am now off to the Inn to say that I shall not want them. Of course, I know what you will think of me, and it is very grievous to me to have to bear the hard judgment of a man whose opinion I value so

highly; but, in the teeth of your terribly strong arguments, I think that there is something to be said on my side of the question. This seat in Parliament has come in my way by chance, and I think it would be pusillanimous in me to reject it, feeling, as I do, that a seat in Parliament confers very great honour. I am, too, very fond of politics, and regard legislation as the finest profession going. Had I any one dependent on me, I probably might not be justified in following the bent of my inclination. But I am all alone in the world, and therefore have a right to make the attempt. If, after a trial of one or two sessions, I should fail in that which I am attempting, it will not even then be too late to go back to the better way. I can assure you that at any rate it is not my intention to be idle.

"I know very well how you will fret and fume over what I say, and how utterly I shall fail in bringing you round to my way of thinking; but as I must write to tell you of my decision, I cannot refrain from defending myself to the best of my ability.

"Yours always faithfully,

"PHINEAS FINN."

Mr. Low received this letter at his chambers, and when he had read it, he simply pressed his lips closely together, placed the sheet of paper back in its envelope, and put it into a drawer at his left hand. Having done this, he went on with what work he had before him, as though his friend's decision were a matter of no consequence to him. As far as he was concerned the thing was done, and there should be an end of it. So he told himself; but nevertheless his mind was full of it all day; and, though he wrote not a word of answer to Phineas, he made a reply within his own mind to every one of the arguments used in the letter. "Great honours! How can there be honour in what comes, as he says, by chance? He hasn't sense enough to understand that the honour comes from the mode of winning it, and from the mode of wearing it; and that the very fact of his being member for Loughshane at this instant simply proves that Loughshane should have had no privilege to return a member! No one dependent on him! Are not his father and his mother and his sisters dependent on him as long as he must eat their bread till he can earn bread of his own? He will never earn bread of his own. He will always be eating bread that others have earned." In this way, before the day was over, Mr. Low became very angry, and swore to himself that he would have nothing more to say to Phineas Finn. But yet he found himself creating plans for encountering and conquering the parliamentary fiend who was at present so cruelly potent with his pupil. It was not till the third evening that he told his wife that Finn had made up his mind not to take chambers. "Then I would have nothing more to say to him," said Mrs. Low, savagely. "For the present I can have nothing more to say to him." "But neither

now nor ever," said Mrs. Low, with great emphasis; "he has been false to you." "No," said Mr. Low, who was a man thoroughly and thoughtfully just at all points; "he has not been false to me. He has always meant what he has said, when he was saying it. But he is weak and blind, and flies like a moth to the candle; one pities the poor moth, and would save him a stump of his wing if it be possible."

Phineas, when he had written his letter to Mr Low, started off for Lincoln's Inn, making his way through the well-known dreary streets of Soho, and through St. Giles's to Long Acre. He knew every corner well, for he had walked the same road almost daily for the last three years. He had conceived a liking for the route, which he might easily have changed without much addition to the distance, by passing through Oxford Street and Holborn; but there was an air of business on which he prided himself in going by the most direct passage, and he declared to himself very often that things dreary and dingy to the eye might be good in themselves. Lincoln's Inn itself is dingy, and the Law Courts therein are perhaps the meanest in which Equity ever disclosed herself. Mr. Low's three rooms in the Old Square, each of them brown with the binding of law books and with the dust collected on law papers, and with furniture that had been brown always, and had become browner with years, were perhaps as unattractive to the eye of a young pupil as any rooms which were ever entered. And the study of the Chancery law itself is not an alluring pursuit till the mind has come to have some insight into the beauty of its ultimate object. Phineas, during his three years' course of reasoning on these things, had taught himself to believe that things ugly on the outside might be very beautiful within; and had therefore come to prefer crossing Poland Street and Soho Square, and so continuing his travels by the Seven Dials and Long Acre. His morning walk was of a piece with his morning studies, and he took pleasure in the gloom of both. But now the taste of his palate had been already changed by the glare of the lamps in and about palatial Westminster, and he found that St. Giles's was disagreeable. The ways about Pall Mall and across the Park to Parliament Street, or to the Treasury, were much pleasanter, and the new offices in Downing Street, already half built, absorbed all that interest which he had hitherto been able to take in the suggested but uncommenced erection of new Law Courts in the neighbourhood of Lincoln's Inn. As he made his way to the porter's lodge under the great gateway of Lincoln's Inn, he told himself that he was glad that he had escaped, at any rate for a while, from a life so dull and dreary. If he could only sit in chambers at the Treasury instead of chambers in that old court, how much pleasanter it would be! After all, as regarded that question of income, it might well be that the Treasury chambers should be the more remunerative, and the more

quickly remunerative, of the two. And, as he thought, Lady Laura might be compatible with the Treasury chambers and Parliament, but could not possibly be made compatible with Old Square, Lincoln's Inn.

But nevertheless there came upon him a feeling of sorrow when the old man at the lodge seemed to be rather glad than otherwise that he did not want the chambers. "Then Mr. Green can have them," said the porter; "that'll be good news for Mr. Green. I don't know what the gen'lemen 'll do for chambers if things goes on as they're going." Mr. Green was welcome to the chambers as far as Phineas was concerned; but Phineas felt nevertheless a certain amount of regret that he should have been compelled to abandon a thing which was regarded both by the porter and by Mr. Green as being so desirable. He had however written his letter to Mr. Low, and made his promise to Barrington Erle, and was bound to Lady Laura Standish; and he walked out through the old gateway into Chancery Lane, resolving that he would not even visit Lincoln's Inn again for a year. There were certain books,—law books,—which he would read at such intervals of leisure as politics might give him; but within the precincts of the Inns of Court he would not again put his foot for twelve months, let learned pundits of the law,—such for instance as Mr. and Mrs. Low,—say what they might.

He had told Mrs. Bunce, before he left his home after breakfast, that he should for the present remain under her roof. She had been much gratified, not simply because lodgings in Great Marlborough Street are less readily let than chambers in Lincoln's Inn, but also because it was a great honour to her to have a member of Parliament in her house. Members of Parliament are not so common about Oxford Street as they are in the neighbourhood of Pall Mall and St. James's Square. But Mr. Bunce, when he came to his dinner, did not join as heartily as he should have done in his wife's rejoicing. Mr. Bunce was in the employment of certain copying law-stationers in Carey Street, and had a strong belief in the law as a profession;—but he had none whatever in the House of Commons. "And he's given up going into chambers?" said Mr. Bunce to his wife.

"Given it up altogether for the present," said Mrs. Bunce.

"And he don't mean to have no clerk?" said Mr. Bunce.

"Not unless it is for his Parliament work."

"There ain't no clerks wanted for that, and what's worse, there ain't no fees to pay 'em. I'll tell you what it is, Jane;—if you don't look sharp there won't be nothing to pay you before long."

"And he in Parliament, Jacob!"

"There ain't no salary for being in Parliament. There are scores of them Parliament gents ain't got so much as 'll pay their dinners for 'em. And then if anybody does trust 'em, there's no getting at 'em to make 'em pay as there is at other folk."

"I don't know that our Mr. Phineas will ever be like that, Jacob."

"That's gammon, Jane. That's the way as women gets themselves took in always. Our Mr. Phineas! Why should our Mr. Phineas be better than anybody else?"

"He's always acted handsome, Jacob."

"There was one time he couldn't pay his lodgings for wellnigh nine months, till his governor come down with the money. I don't know whether that was handsome. It knocked me about terrible, I know."

"He always meant honest, Jacob."

"I don't know that I care much for a man's meaning when he runs short of money. How is he going to see his way, with his seat in Parliament, and this giving up of his profession? He owes us near a quarter now."

"He paid me two months this morning, Jacob; so he don't owe a farthing."

"Very well;—so much the better for us. I shall just have a few words with Mr. Low, and see what he says to it. For myself I don't think half so much of Parliament folk as some do. They're for promising everything before they's elected; but not one in twenty of 'em is as good as his word when he gets there."

Mr. Bunce was a copying journeyman, who spent ten hours a day in Carey Street with a pen between his fingers; and after that he would often spend two or three hours of the night with a pen between his fingers in Marlborough Street. He was a thoroughly hard-working man, doing pretty well in the world, for he had a good house over his head, and always could find raiment and bread for his wife and eight children; but, nevertheless, he was an unhappy man because he suffered from political grievances, or, I should more correctly say, that his grievances were semi-political and semi-social. He had no vote, not being himself the tenant of the house in Great Marlborough Street. The tenant was a tailor who occupied the shop, whereas Bunce occupied the whole of the remainder of the premises. He was a lodger, and lodgers were not as yet trusted with the franchise. And he had ideas, which he himself admitted to be very raw, as to the injustice of the manner in which he was paid for his work. So much a folio, without reference to the way in which his work was done, without regard to the success of his work, with no questions asked of himself, was, as he thought, no proper way of remunerating a man for his labours. He had long since joined a Trade Union, and for two years past had paid a subscription of a shilling a week towards its funds. He longed to be doing some battle against his superiors, and to be putting himself in opposition to his employers;—not that he objected personally to Messrs. Foolscap, Margin, and Vellum, who always made much of him as a useful man;—but because some such antagonism would be manly, and the fighting of some battle would be the right thing to do. "If Labour don't mean to go to the wall him-

self," Bunce would say to his wife, "Labour must look alive, and put somebody else there."

Mrs. Bunce was a comfortable motherly woman, who loved her husband but hated politics. As he had an aversion to his superiors in the world because they were superiors, so had she a liking for them for the same reason. She despised people poorer than herself, and thought it a fair subject for boasting that her children always had meat for dinner. If it was ever so small a morsel, she took care that they had it, in order that the boast might be maintained. The world had once or twice been almost too much for her,—when, for instance, her husband had been ill; and again, to tell the truth, for the last three months of that long period in which Phineas had omitted to pay his bills; but she had kept a fine brave heart during those troubles, and could honestly swear that the children always had a bit of meat, though she herself had been occasionally without it for days together. At such times she would be more than ordinarily meek to Mr. Margin, and especially courteous to the old lady who lodged in her first-floor drawing-room,—for Phineas lived up two pair of stairs,—and she would excuse such servility by declaring that there was no knowing how soon she might want assistance. But her husband, in such emergencies, would become furious and quarrelsome, and would declare that Labour was going to the wall, and that something very strong must be done at once. That shilling which Bunce paid weekly to the Union she regarded as being absolutely thrown away,—as much so as though he cast it weekly into the Thames. And she had told him so, over and over again, making heart-piercing allusions to the eight children and to the bit of meat. He would always endeavour to explain to her that there was no other way under the sun for keeping Labour from being sent to the wall;—but he would do so hopelessly and altogether ineffectually, and she had come to regard him as a lunatic to the extent of that one weekly shilling.

She had a woman's instinctive partiality for comeliness in a man, and was very fond of Phineas Finn because he was handsome. And now she was very proud of him because he was a member of Parliament. She had heard,—from her husband, who had told her the fact with much disgust,—that the sons of Dukes and Earls go into Parliament, and she liked to think that the fine young man to whom she talked more or less every day should sit with the sons of Dukes and Earls. When Phineas had really brought distress upon her by owing her some thirty or forty pounds, she could never bring herself to be angry with him,—because he was handsome and because he dined out with Lords. And she had triumphed greatly over her husband, who had desired to be severe upon his aristocratic debtor, when the money had all been paid in a lump.

"I don't know that he's any great catch," Bunce had said, when the prospect of their lodger's departure had been debated between them.

"Jacob," said his wife, "I don't think you feel it when you've got people respectable about you."

"The only respectable man I know," said Jacob, "is the man as earns his bread; and Mr. Finn, as I take it, is a long way from that yet."

Phineas returned to his lodgings before he went down to his club, and again told Mrs. Bunce that he had altogether made up his mind about the chambers. "If you'll keep me I shall stay here for the first session I daresay."

"Of course we shall be only too proud, Mr. Finn; and though it mayn't perhaps be quite the place for a member of Parliament——"

"But I think it is quite the place."

"It's very good of you to say so, Mr. Finn, and we'll do our very best to make you comfortable. Respectable we are, I may say; and though Bunce is a bit rough sometimes——"

"Never to me, Mrs. Bunce."

"But he is rough,—and silly, too, with his radical nonsense, paying a shilling a week to a nasty Union just for nothing. Still he means well, and there ain't a man who works harder for his wife and children;—that I will say of him. And if he do talk politics——"

"But I like a man to talk politics, Mrs. Bunce."

"For a gentleman in Parliament of course it's proper; but I never could see what good it could do to a law-stationer; and when he talks of Labour going to the wall, I always ask him whether he didn't get his wages regular last Saturday. But, Lord love you, Mr. Finn, when a man as is a journeyman has took up politics and joined a Trade Union, he ain't no better than a milestone for his wife to take and talk to him."

After that Phineas went down to the Reform Club, and made one of those who were buzzing there in little crowds and uttering their prophecies as to future events. Lord De Terrier was to go out. That was certain. Whether Mr. Mildmay was to come in was uncertain. That he would go to Windsor to-morrow morning was not to be doubted; but it was thought very probable that he might plead his age, and decline to undertake the responsibility of forming a Ministry.

"And what then?" said Phineas to his friend Fitzgibbon.

"Why, then there will be a choice out of three. There is the Duke, who is the most incompetent man in England; there is Monk, who is the most unfit; and there is Gresham, who is the most unpopular. I can't conceive it possible to find a worse Prime Minister than either of the three;—but the country affords no other."

"And which would Mildmay name?"

"All of them,—one after the other, so as to make the embarrassment the greater." That was Mr. Fitzgibbon's description of the crisis; but then it was understood that Mr. Fitzgibbon was given to romancing.

SAINT PAULS.

DECEMBER, 1867.

ALL FOR GREED.

CHAPTER VIII.

LESS THAN A SQUIRE.

THE Morvilles belonged to a class more numerous in the west than in any other part of France;—to the class known under the denomination of gentillâtres de campagne. Before the Revolution these people had their use, for from them the lesser Princes of the Blood, such as Messieurs de Condé and Conti, for instance, and the Great Vassals, such as Messieurs de Montmorency, Rohan, and others of that stamp, took the more active part of their households; and their adventurous spirit, mixed with the daring of the "cadets de famille," helped, from the battles of the Ligue to those of La Vendée, to give to the armies of France their reputation for recklessness and dash, and to keep up the prestige of "la furia francese," acquired during the Italian invasions of Charles of Anjou.

So far, then, the pre-revolutionary existence of these small landholders has a motive. But after '89! After '89 it would be hard to find any reason why they should continue to be; yet there they are as distinct as ever from the classes both above and below them; and having in good earnest "neither learnt nor forgotten" anything, they can scarcely be described otherwise than as a nuisance.

What remains of the historical nobility of France has,—so long as all remembrance of, or reference to history has not been wiped out,—a kind of signification. While a Court and a Government subsist, which require great dignitaries, enormously paid functionaries, men whose business it is to represent the splendour of the country,—diplomatists, for instance, whose duty it still is to communicate with foreign Courts after the fashion kept up in those Courts,—while all this yet subsists, the ancient names of France have an obvious raison d'être. Besides, in some cases they serve to perpetuate the traditions of elegance, refinement, good-breeding, and really gentlemanly feeling,

for which France was once famous. But to what use can possibly be put the families of men who assert that their social position,—that is, their name,—prevents them from gaining money in commerce or trade, and the extreme smallness of whose means deprives them of even the ordinary education of the middle-class in any other country at the present day? Too poor to live on a footing of equality with those whom they call their equals, too proud to associate with those whom they call "low-born,"—and who despise them,—too idle to learn, and too proud to work, they live on in their uncomfortable homes, and on their narrow resources, virtually cut off from all communication with the great currents of activity or thought, and are, perhaps, in all Europe, the most thoroughly useless class that can be imagined,—the completest representatives of all that was worst in the Ancien Régime.

Early in this century there lived, at about a league's distance from D——, at a small, tumble-down kind of farm called La Morvillière, two brothers, one name Réné, the other Charles, de Morville. The elder stuck to his "dirty acres," married, had two children,—a girl, who died, and Raoul, whom we have already seen, and who was now twenty-two. The younger, Charles, ran away from home at seventeen, was sought for in vain for several years, had made a sailor of himself, and achieved glory, by dint of hard service, and harder knocks. He was now an admiral, and had recently gained fresh distinction in China.

Although a vast distance lay, in the mind of the Vicomte, between the "Château" and this wretched little lairdship of La Morvillière, and although the "fils des croisés" looked loftily down upon persons whose ancestors had certainly never been more than squires to Crusaders or Crusaders' sons, even if they had been that, still, old Morville was a capital shot, not an unpleasant companion, and in the thinly-peopled neighbourhood of D—— he was better than nothing. At all events, he was not a bourgeois! He was not a lawyer or a banker, or an employé, or a savant. He knew nothing, and did nothing! There was always that to say in his favour. So Monsieur le Vicomte consorted with him. The two wives, who were now both dead, became very dear friends, and the two Demoiselles de Vérancour went to the same convent, at Poitiers, with Marie de Morville, for whose schooling at that venerable institution her parents contrived to find just money enough to pay. The girl was delicate, required good living and exercise, and the bad living and seclusion of the convent killed her. She went out like a lamp, and as no one around her could understand why, she was, on the whole, rather blamed than pitied.

Her mother mourned in silence over her loss, and, at the end of a couple of years, died also. Died, not only of grieving, but because in the dull, weakening monotony of an existence carried on under such conditions as those of the Morville family, there are no reserve-forces

created. Life is never replenished, and when the particular sources of vitality of one epoch have been drained, there is no general fountain of life from which to borrow the vitality required for a fresh period. There is no transformation of strength, and men and women,—but, above all, women,—die simply because they have not life enough left in them wherewith to go on living. The clock goes down, and stops.

Madame de Morville and her friend, the Vicomtesse, were no more,—it is the fittest expression for the act of their departing this life,—within a year of each other, and the void left at La Morvillière was never to be filled up. The wife had been, what she so frequently is in France, the pivot upon which everything and everybody turns. In characterising her emphatically as "wife," I am, perhaps, wrong. One ought rather to say the housekeeper, for that is in reality her function. She rules supreme, and makes it possible, no matter how straitened are the ways and means, for the family to exist without getting into debt, and without having their embarrassments dragged before the public.

When the mistress of the house was gone, the house at La Morvillière went to wrack and ruin. Old Morville was utterly incapable of either putting or keeping order anywhere, and he flew into perpetual fits of fury at the ever-recurring evidences of disorder. He did not complain of being obliged to live chiefly on cabbage soup, but he stormed at the fact of the cabbage soup being rarely eatable. The pigs were so ill-fed that there was no fat to the bacon, and the historical food of Frenchmen in or about La Vendée came up to table little more than a vast bowlfull of greenish water and yellowish grease. In the shooting season there was game, it is true, but old Morville, at sixty, was not so active as he used to be; for the house was terribly damp, and he could not afford to warm it, neither could he afford good wine to light up the fires in his own bodily system; and so he grew rheumatic and morose. There was no money to pay for anything, and the D—— tradespeople were eternally clamouring for the payment of their small bills. It was a wretched state of existence, and most wretched did old Morville find it.

As to Raoul, the real misery, however, was for him, who had never yet complained. He attained the age of twenty-two, with comparatively no education at all. But here Nature compensated for all deficiencies. The boy's energies were so rare, his intelligence was so bright, his desire to acquire knowledge so steady and strong, that he managed to scrape together an amount of information which put him on a par with the other young men about him, whilst the difficulty with which he had acquired it made him infinitely their superior.

The Curé of D—— had taken a deep interest in Raoul from the boy's earliest childhood, and the Curé of D—— was a remarkable man,—remarkable for his profane, as well as theological, learning, for his liberal opinions, and for the uprightness of his character. He

taught Raoul all he could teach him,—Latin, history, grammar, and the elements of geometry, and gave him the run of his library, which was an extensive one.

Raoul had had another patron,—a very singular one; and this was no other than Martin Prévost, who had an inexplicable fondness for the lad, and was reported to have said that if old Morville would or could do nothing for his son, he would help him whenever he required help.

The tradition in and about D—— was, that Madame de Morville had once rendered a great service to old Prévost's mother, when Madame de Morville herself was a young married woman, and Madame Prévost an aged one, within two years of her death. Monsieur le Curé knew all about it, and it was supposed that Martin Prévost did so too. At all events, his liking for Raoul was a fact. Old Morville, so far from feeling kindly towards Martin Prévost, held his inclination for the boy to be a positive piece of presumption, and formally forbade his son ever to associate with Richard Prévost. Admiral de Morville, who was a sensible, practical man, and had rubbed off the crust of provincial prejudice, if it ever adhered to him, in his rough contact with the world, did his utmost whenever he came to La Morvillière to atone for his brother's susceptibilities and stupid mistakes, and he never failed to call upon Martin Prévost once or twice during his stay in the neighbourhood, and invariably took his nephew with him on these occasions.

But since the return of the two sisters from their convent at Poitiers, the one attraction for Raoul de Morville in D—— was the Château. The pretext was a ready one. Raoul had been devotedly attached to his dead sister. There was but one year between the two, and he was sixteen when Marie died. He himself was wont to say he should never be consoled for her loss, and that it had been a heavier blow to him even than the death of his mother. Felicie de Vérancour was reputed to have been Marie de Morville's chosen friend, though Marie herself had seemed to have a yearning love towards little Vévette, who was but a child, and called the elder schoolfellow invariably her "petite maman."

How it all came about, who shall say? And, first, what was it? Raoul and Vévette glided into a perfect unity of heart and soul, into an identity of being, as a boat on an unknown river glides down into a whirlpool, without knowing it. They knew only of their happiness; they did not know of their love, till the fact stood revealed to them that their love was misery. Then it was too late.

No one in the Vérancour household had heeded Raoul. He had not a sou!—he was sans conséquence. Not quite so completely sans conséquence as Monsieur Richard, because he was a gentleman, after all; but he was "beyond the pale," because of his poverty. His remarkable good looks, his winning ways, his intelligence, his fiery

energy,—all went for nothing. It was totally impossible a "man without a sou" should be dangerous to a "well-born woman," and so no one ever adverted to the possible danger of Raoul for Vévette. As to old Morville, he never thought of his son at all, till his brother the Admiral came down to La Morvillière one day, and signified that "something" must be done for Raoul.

"Something! but what?" grumbled the father.

"I will take care of that," replied the Admiral, and then propounded the famous scheme for the clerkship in the Admiralty.

This happened about the end of September, and at first there seemed small chance of the Admiral's project ever coming to maturity. Not only did old Morville object to his son becoming an employé, but Raoul himself respectfully, but firmly, refused to consent until he should have reflected amply upon the obligations of the career opened to him. Old Morville was a fool, and his brother was neither astonished at, nor did he care much for, his refusal; but Raoul,—what made him hesitate? That the Admiral could not fathom, and, after all, as his nephew only asked for time, he gave it him, and waited. In the first days of October the Admiral returned to Paris, and it was settled that Raoul should write to him when he had made up his mind, and that he should have till the end of the month to do so.

The one thing to which Raoul de Morville did make up his mind was, that Vévette should one day be his wife. But what were the means by which to achieve this end?

CHAPTER IX.

MONSIEUR LÉON.

The great evil of that in France which is not town is, that neither is it country. All real grandeur is one, and the surging and seething and moaning and toiling of the human waves in a huge city's ocean are as terrible a sight as the upheaving of the Atlantic in a storm. Nor is the man who stands alone upon the loneliest shore more lonely than he who seeks solitude in the rush and roar of human passions in a great town. Life stirs the depths of both those seas, and both are full of sublime poetry;—but there is no poetry in a pond, and no life in a canal, for neither has any depths to be stirred. What is non-Parisian in France is not rural or agricultural, it is narrowly provincial. On a narrow, shallow scale, an imitation is sought to be produced of a gigantic model, and, like all imitations, it is a failure. It is truly as a pond to a sea, and as no real ground-swells move it, and as no real storm-winds lash it, it is, as a pond, lifeless, and it stagnates. Nothing but disease is to be gained by living always on the banks of a pond, and thus it is that the true provincial in France breathes

only the odours of stagnation, or if he mistakes for life and activity his own attempts to ruffle the waters, he merely succeeds in stirring up mud.

It is a dreary and unwholesome existence this of small provincial towns in France. Devoid of all that elevates, it detaches man from himself;—flinging him, as it were, away into some vast interest or cause, and pinning him down to all his lower wants and instincts, paralysing his mind, drying up his heart; and,—far from guarding him from vice,—only making vice itself worse by making it more matter of fact.

If the little town of D—— had had all its houses unroofed, and their secrets laid bare by a "diable boiteux," you would have shuddered to find how much more degraded the human species was there than in the larger centre of the capital itself; for you would have found all the levels much lower, and all the sins of sensuality and greed utterly unbalanced by any generous instincts or lofty aspirations.

As the collective efforts of the population of D—— tended persistently towards the fashioning of that small place upon the approved plan of a Grande Ville, you would, had you lived there, have found a miniature copy of all the faults and absurdities of bigger cities.

There were people who did not visit other people, but who, all the same, kept a close watch over the proceedings of those other persons whom they could not visit! There was intrigue and hypocrisy and dishonesty and cunning enough to furnish the amount desired by the most despotic Court or Government in Europe a hundred years ago; a perpetual craving for "place," though there was no place higher than the dignity of Maire or Conseiller Municipal;—and a considerable sprinkling of adultery.

D——, in this its transition state of progress towards the morals and manners of a great town, had its "lion,"—a real indigenous lion, or, as the French term it, a "coq de village." This was no other than a certain Monsieur Duprez, a man of some six or seven-and-thirty, whose father had, twenty years before, been the medical practitioner of the place, and who was, by the public voice of D——, declared to have "made his fortune." Monsieur Duprez was what ladies'-maids term a wonderfully fine man. He had bushy whiskers and red lips, curly hair and a white forehead, and there was about him a certain air of ease and good nature and jollity which drew towards him many who, "de parti pris," had decided to keep aloof from him. The deceased doctor had left his son a goodly house in the principal street of D——, and, instead of selling it, the said son jauntily opined that he was rich enough to keep it, and that it was pleasant to have a home in the spot where he was born, and where, as he was graciously pleased to observe, he loved every one and every one loved him. And so Monsieur Léon used to come often to his paternal mansion, and stay there for a few weeks at a time, and it was rumoured that a strong

attraction was exercised over him by the wife of the Juge de Paix. This lady, though his senior, and now past forty, was still undeniably handsome, and people asserted that he could not loosen the chain with which she had bound him. However, be that as it may, Monsieur Duprez came very often to D——, sent down showy articles of furniture from Paris, gave dinners now and then to the "authorities!" played billiards with the whole town, beating everybody, and at the café on the Market Place, opposite the Mairie, was the life and soul of the daily gatherings, and initiated all D—— into the deepest mysteries of politics and finance throughout Europe. What had set the crown to this gentleman's popularity was, that, about a year before the period we are speaking of, he had sent a tolerable-looking horse, and what he styled a Tilbury, down to his house, and when he was present he drove himself out in this vehicle, and when he was absent he lent it to the Juge de Paix, who drove out his wife. This the people of D—— called an equipage, and the position of Monsieur Léon became a solid one.

One man alone would never consent to have anything to do with Monsieur Duprez, and that man was old Martin Prévost. He resisted all that amiable person's repeated attempts to captivate him, and when any of their neighbours affirmed that Monsieur Léon had made his fortune, and was a rich man, he invariably answered, "That is what we shall see some day."

Unfortunately, in the life of such small towns as D—— the attraction hardly ever eluded is the café. Business and idleness lead to it alike. Either it is the natural place of appointment for those who have affairs on hand, or it is the natural place for those to lounge in who have no employment for their hours. And so, from the notary or avoué down to the labourer, and from the petty tradesman up to the neighbouring squire, you are pretty certain to see the entire male population of a small town and its environs send its members successively to the café,—above all, if there be but one.

Martin Prévost and his nephew, though so dissimilar in all their ways, were alike in this, that neither ever set foot in the café; and that was what could be said of no other individual in D——.

M. de Vérancour, on the other hand, would occasionally stroll in, and gratify himself with a "demi-tasse," or it might be a "choppe," according to the season or the time of the day at which his visit was paid. Within the last twelvemonths Raoul de Morville had taken to frequenting the café regularly; and, above all, when Monsieur Duprez was at D—— he would pass hour after hour playing billiards, or talking with "Monsieur Léon," as he was familiarly called.

Raoul's age, disposition, and peculiar circumstances, all combined to make him the easy dupe of a man like Duprez. Public opinion,—and no matter how small the field, a few hundred men soon constitute a public, and force those who live with them to accept the fact,—

public opinion proclaimed Monsieur Léon successful. Here was his power over Raoul. Success was necessarily young Morville's idol, for to succeed was to win Vévette.

But succeed in what? What was the particular career in which Raoul wished to succeed, or for which he was fitted? That point remained vague and undetermined in his mind, but Monsieur Léon and his "success" fascinated him. Now, those two words "réussir" and "parvenir," which have within the last fifteen years in France risen to such a terrible importance, and which, be it observed, never are associated with any distinct object,—it is never said in what a man has succeeded, or to what he is parvenu,—those two words simply mean the sudden acquirement of wealth by a lucky chance. They imply neither genius, toil, nor patience; they merely imply that, by some piece of good luck, the individual in question has acquired wealth before he was too old to enjoy it. They make the successful man interesting, because fate is supposed to have decided in his favour.

Day after day then Raoul thought more highly of Monsieur Duprez, and set all his energies to discovering how he, too, could compel fortune without loss of time. It was not that he disliked work, but that he was impatient; he would have toiled night and day for his end, but he longed for Vévette. And so he came to question his new friend about his Golden Fleece expeditions, and Monsieur Duprez smiled and said nothing was so easy, and that really if men were not wealthy now-a-days it was that they did not care to be so. And then he invariably wound up his speech with, "Look at me; when I went to Paris ten years ago, I had but a thousand francs in my pocket. I could not sell the house here, therefore it was a dead weight. I had one thousand francs ready money,—and look at me now!" And at these words Monsieur Léon was wont to indulge in a look and gesture that seemed to say he could buy all D—— if he chose. Barring old Prévost, that was the interpretation all D—— gave to the words.

Ten years! yes; but ten years was an eternity. Raoul could not wait ten years. Why, he should be thirty-two and Vévette twenty-seven. "Ten years, what an age!"

"Money is made quicker now," would reply Monsieur Léon. "With ten thousand francs in hand a man who knows what he is about may make a hundred thousand in six months and a million in a year."

What Aladdin's lamp-like visions! But where on earth were the ten thousand francs to be got that were to be the key to them all?

By dint of listening to Monsieur Léon, however, young Morville's head got filled with ideas of the possibilities of riches; and one day, about the middle of September, Monsieur Léon imparted to his eager disciple his plans for the working of a silver mine in Mexico, and proved, to the latter's entire satisfaction, that the man who should

invest two thousand francs, no more, in that incomparable scheme, would inevitably realise fifty per cent., upon his venture; for under the seal of absolute secresy, Monsieur Léon mentioned the names of great chiefs upon the Bourse who were resolved to drive up the shares to fabulous premiums the moment the prospectus of the company appeared. Then, too, there was no saying what the future might not bring forth,—a young, active, energetic man would be required to undertake the journey to Mexico, and report on the progress of the works. It might be a journey of some danger, but the remuneration would be princely, and on his return home what might not the successful emissary aspire to.

"Only," Monsieur Duprez would prudently add, "the repute of the enterprise is so high amongst the few who know of it that it would be probably impossible to secure twenty shares now."

Monsieur Léon, however, had taken a sincere liking for Raoul. The young fellow's intelligence and ardour pleased him; he delighted in his ambition, and would go all lengths to serve him.

"But, my dear friend," objected he one day, "what is the use of talking in this way of shares, and silver mines, and premiums, and Mexican companies? Where, in the name of Heaven, could you get two thousand francs? Supposing that by any effort I could get you the twenty shares, could you by any witchcraft get the money?"

"Who knows?" had been Raoul's reply. "Perhaps I might find means."

This was just the period when Admiral de Morville having proposed the clerkship in the Marine Ministry to his nephew, consented to give the latter time to consider whether he accepted it or not.

In the first days of October Monsieur Duprez's importance rose immensely in the public mind of D——, for he was observed to receive telegrams incessantly, sometimes two in the same day. D—— was not a telegraph station, and a man on horseback had to bring the despatches from Cholet, an hour's ride, and his arrival was an event, and shed glory over the receiver of the missives, who was forthwith elevated to the rank of a Mirès or a Péreire.

On the 6th of the month, Monsieur Léon announced to Raoul that he could secure the shares, and that he might have one week wherein to find the money. "But," added he, "after the fifteenth it will be too late; for on the afternoon of that day I must start for Paris to undertake the settlement of various preliminary details with my friends."

Had Raoul de Morville in all his surroundings any one who cared to note the changes in his humour or his countenance, they might have marked his visible anxiety during that week. But there were none who thus cared, and during those few days he never went near the Château.

On the afternoon of the 14th of October Raoul called on Monsieur

Duprez, and deposited in his hands two bank-notes of one thousand francs each. And his financial patron slapped him on the shoulder, and said his fortune was made.

Monsieur Léon left for Paris the next day, convinced in his own mind that the money came to Raoul from his uncle, for on that same morning the postman had carried to La Morvillière a registered letter with the Paris postmark. These little details are public property in places like D——, and the successful parvenu had made up his mind as to what was in that registered letter.

"Goes halves with the nephew in his prospects of gain," muttered he to himself. "Vieux loup de mer, va!"

CHAPTER X.

THE FEAST FOR THE DEAD.

I HAVE already said that the Curé of D—— was a remarkable man. His great superiority lay in that he was so upright in mind and so largely, unmistakably human. The great fault of all ecclesiastics, whether belonging to the Church of Rome or to other confessions, is that they confine themselves narrowly within their establishments, and ceasing to be men, become churchmen. This was precisely what the Curé of D—— did not do. He was a man among his fellow-men, feeling for them and with them, and never preaching at, or condemning, or denouncing and renouncing them, but simply striving to understand them. Neither, strong in his own faith as he was, did he ever take upon himself to help the Almighty in his work of awakening faith in others, but waited till God's grace touched them; waited prayerfully and trustfully, but could not be brought to recognise the duty of knocking and driving faith into people by sledge-hammer threats of damnation.

The Curé of D—— had nothing about him of the conventional Apostolic type. Nobody among his parishioners, neither the old women nor the very young ones, ever called him either an angel or a saint, but every one respected him, and all were ready to declare that he was the most thoroughly honest man that ever breathed. He was ugly and awkward, being large jointed, stout, and ungainly in his movements, and having a big round head, with a large flat face. Yet the kind truthful expression of his ox-like grey eyes invited confidence and inspired courage. Downhearted people always went to him and came away cheered. He was of a singularly undaunted nature, loved all men, and feared nothing. When a misfortune happened to an unbeliever he was by that unbeliever's side an hour after, giving him the practical help he needed, and invariably saying that good Christians wanted him far less than bad ones. It was notorious that when Père Vincent's cow died, and left him ruined, Monsieur le

Curé gave him the means of buying another out of his own purse; and as Père Vincent was an infidel and a scoffer and the son of a father who had in '93 massacred priests, this fact scandalised the bishops; but it caused Père Vincent to have himself baptised within the year, and to bow his head meekly before the gentle force of the Gospel. It was also notorious that in June, '48, when Monsieur le Maire, terrified almost into insanity, was nowhere to be found, the Curé had assumed his place, and distributing cartouches to the Garde Nationale and sturdy counsel to each individual man, had organised and kept up such a respectable system of defence for the little town of D——, that the various insurrectionary bands that swept through the department agreed to leave D—— unvisited, and avowed later that they were afraid of the Curé.

Well! it is true; that was a thing often said of our friend. Many people pretended they were afraid of him; but those who did so were always found to be half-and-half natures, faint souls, who quailed less before darkness than before light.

Between old Prévost and the Curé there had been a sort of tacit compromise, somewhat after the fashion of that which exists in France between the Church and the State; each, at bottom, regarding the other as a necessary evil. The Curé couldn't, for the life of him, esteem Martin Prévost, for he was far too sure of the latter's usurious exactions; and his charity and his honesty had bouts of hard fighting with each other over the grandson of the Swiss valet de chambre; —for, let it be avowed, the Curé was, of the two, more honest even than charitable.

This it was which made Martin Prévost respect him. A Voltairian himself, if he had had to do with a priest who was only a priest, let what might have been his virtues, he would have got the better of him, and made his life intolerable in D——; but the Curé met him on his own ground, and, if they had tried conclusions, would have beaten him on it, and this Martin Prévost felt, and avoided all collision with him. If the Curé stated that money must be given for some practical purpose, old Prévost gave his share without murmuring, and what was more, Madame Jean contributed hers too; for the Curé never went about begging, and never got up "quêtes" for sentimental objects.

When Martin Prévost came to his violent end, the Curé was, as he invariably proved to be upon all emergencies, the most useful person in D——. He inspired the Maire with courage, and the Juge de Paix with good sense, and persuaded the Juge d'Instruction, who was sent from the Chef Lieu du Département, to refrain from committing daily acts of arbitrary folly. If it had not been for the Curé the whole town would have been preventively imprisoned, and at the same time, if it had not been for him, the scanty traces of the direction taken by the murderer would not have been discovered. To Monsieur Richard

the Curé had shown every imaginable kindness, going even the length of offering him a room at the Presbytère, if the residence in his crime-polluted, blood-stained home proved too much for him.

"C'est un fier homme que Monsieur le Curé?"—so proclaimed Madame Jean, who in no way partook of her defunct master's Voltairianism; preferring, however, for her own spiritual needs, the mild humdrum, gossiping guidance of the Vicaire to the rough-handed thorough direction of his superior.

All Saints' Day had come and was past, and a finer first of November had rarely been witnessed. The sun was bright and warm, and the sky blue as in May, and all D—— had been present at High Mass, and all the womankind of D—— had attended vespers.

The church clock struck six, night was beginning to close in, and the vigils for the feast of the dead, the solemn fête of the next day, were ended. The Curé gave a last look round the sacristy to see that all was in order; he had already allowed the Vicaire and the sacristan to go to their respective homes; and then taking in hand an enormous key, which hung with three or four others to a ponderous iron ring, he prepared to put it into the lock of the so-called choir-door, and lock from the outside the entrance which was opposite to the Presbytère. Just as the key grated in the ward he heard a voice speaking to him. "Don't shut me up, please," said the sweet, girlish voice, and a slight form, clothed in black, brushed past the Curé and crossed the threshold.

"You, my child?" exclaimed he on recognising Vévette. "Why, I didn't see you in church. I thought you had gone to St. Philibert."

"No; I did not; Félicie did. You know I always come here." These last words were said in a subdued tone, and contained an allusion to what was rather a sore point between the Curé and the Château.

In former days the Château had had two parishes; the upper or eastern parts of the estate lying within the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical authorities of D——, while the lands to the west belonged to the parish of St. Philibert. The Canon Law of France prescribing that High Mass on Sundays and feast days shall be attended by every parishioner at the church of his parish, the Vérancour family had seemingly no choice now save to go into the town for the exercise of their religious duties; but the little hamlet of St. Philibert had attractions for Mademoiselle Félicie, and she maintained that she had still a right to regard herself as a parishioner of St. Philibert, and at all events to take the Curé of St. Philibert for her confessor. Accordingly, the compromise hit upon tacitly by both parties was, that if the inmates of the Château attended all great ceremonies at the town church, they were free to attend all lesser ones at the church, or chapel rather, of the village. Now vespers and vigils are not strictly obligatory, and

mass being over, Mademoiselle Félicie had resorted for the afternoon services to the place of worship most agreeable to her, leaving her sister, as was her wont, to hear every note of "les offices" at the church at D——.

"It is late for you to be out alone, my child," said the Curé, as he turned the heavy key in the rusty lock of the door.

"I am not alone," answered Vévette. "Mère Jubine's Louison is with me," and she pointed to the tall figure of a girl who was standing at a few yards from them, close to the trunk of a sycamore.

By the dim rays of the lantern that he carried in his hand you could see an expression of displeasure pass over the rugged features of the Curé. "She is not a fitting person to accompany you," observed he in a loud whisper.

"Oh! Monsieur le Curé," rejoined Vévette, half reproachfully; "you must not be hard upon her; she is really a very good girl; and, besides, if she had not promised to come back with me, I could not have come at all."

"No! of course not," retorted he, "so long as Mademoiselle Félicie indulges in particular fancies for this or that chapel, or this or that minister of God."

"Ah! Monsieur le Curé," interrupted Vévette, "now you are hard upon Félicie."

"I hope I am not hard upon any one," said the Curé; "but I am anxious to see the worship of the Almighty kept pure from all unworthy personal considerations; and, for instance, my child, I do hope that if death,—or the Bishop,—should remove me from D——, you will be to my successor, as your parish priest, all you have been to me, even should he happen to be the reverse of whatever you may choose to think pleasant or agreeable. Where are we tending?" he added, after a moment's pause, and walking on a step or two, "with all these littlenesses, and caprices, and hypocrisies? The love of God and the fear of God are disappearing from human hearts, and in their place we have new-fangled practices, pet-prayers, and medals! Medals!" he repeated in a singular tone of deprecation. "Forms! forms! imitation piety!"

Vévette smiled, and said with a touch of raillery in her sweet voice, "Well! what you say is always the exact reverse of what the Abbé Leroy says." The Curé of St. Philibert usually went by his own name, whilst the parish priest of D—— was emphatically "Monsieur le Curé" for ten miles round. "The Abbé Leroy insists upon it that we can never bind ourselves down by too many forms."

"The Abbé Leroy is a Jesuit," broke in the Curé, abruptly. "They don't know where they are leading the Church, nor how they are falsifying her teachings. However, faith and prayer are our only arms;—and hard work," he added; "the incessant labour to bring all

our brethren to see the truth, and love it. My poor little lamb! don't let yourself be be-medalled. Love God, and strive beyond your strength to act uprightly and honestly; to do what is right. All the medals in the world won't help you as much as that will."

Thus saying, they had reached the threshold of the Presbytère, the door of which was opened by a stern-featured woman, long past the canonic age,* and familiar to D—— as "Monsieur le Curé's Lise."

"I've been drawn into preaching," observed the Curé, with a shake of the head; "a dangerous habit!—leads to intolerance, and to judging one's neighbours. Here, dear child, take this box of dragées; † they come from the christening of this morning;—Pierre Campion's little girl, you know;"—and he tendered to Vévette a round box which he extracted from the deep pockets of his wide soutane.

"Nay," objected Vévette, "not all,—give me half."

"Give the other half to Mademoiselle Félicie from me; in her peculiar parlance she will tell you she adores dragées,"—the Curé made a wry face as he uttered the words; "and make haste home now, for look at those masses of cloud to the west; we shall have rain in no time; and just feel how cold the wind has grown. All our fine days are over."

Vévette hurried down the steep path with her companion, not knowing why the Curé's parting words had struck her with a sudden chill. It seemed to her as though all her fine days were at an end.

And sure enough the weather did change, and wind and rain howled and pelted all the night, and the morning rose upon as gloomy a "jour des morts" as any inhabitant of D—— cared to remember. At a little after nine the tolling of the church bell apprised the population that mass for the souls of the dead would soon be chanted, and from almost every house or shop-door you saw individuals of both sexes and all ages issuing; for whatever the religious opinions of Frenchmen or women, this is a fête from which they are rarely absent. The bell tolled on for more than half an hour, till, at ten o'clock, it ceased, marking the moment when High Mass began.

The church of D—— was, like many of those in the west of France, built at various periods; destroyed during the barbarous wars of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries,—for which destruction we English had a good deal to answer,—and re-constructed according to the style of the epoch following those troubles. It had a crypt, which with a part of the wall at the back of the choir was of the tenth century, the nave was of the fifteenth, and the chief entrance, with its pointed Gothic arch and rich stone carvings, bore the date of 1508. Inside it was very plain, but possessed a few objects of local interest,—one hand-

* No priest is allowed in France to be served by a woman under forty.

† The poorest person, upon the occasion of a christening, presents the officiating priest with a box of dragées (sugared almonds).

some tomb of a princess of the House of Anjou; another, quite modern, of a distinguished Polish exile; and several partially-filled windows of extremely fine old stained-glass. The Revolution had committed great havoc here, and vast spaces of dull lead-coloured panes intervened between the rescued portions of colour, gorgeous as the richest tissues of the East, and quite sufficient, when the sun blazed upon them in midsummer, to throw a carpet of red, blue, and gold upon the stone pavement of the aisles.

There was no brightening ray, however, to enliven the church on this 2nd of November. All was dismal as the occasion itself. The altar was hung with black, and dimly lighted, and in the centre of the nave rose a large, heavy-looking edifice draped in black cloth, covered with silver flames, surmounted with black and white plumes, and surrounded with tall, great tapers, the yellow wax wherefrom guttered down in the draughts of air that entered through every opening. At a little after nine you began to hear the sharp sound of sabots upon the floor. They came in one by one; the closing door gave a muffled slam, the ring of an umbrella dropping upon the pavement produced a metallic sound, the wooden heels tapped against the stone, a half-drenched, poorly-dressed peasant made his, or her, way up to the wooden benches, and all was again still. Till just before mass was commenced only the very devout were visible, and these were mostly country people,—what in France are called cultivateurs,—and their families. During the procession round the church, there were few of the townsfolk, but all who were present followed the procession, and joined in the ghostly chants which the ritual of Rome prescribes for this part of the ceremony. One of the earliest of these assistants was the wood-cutter, Prosper Morel, and though he came the very last in the line following the banner and the priests, he seemed foremost of all in the fervour of spirit with which he joined the ardent invocations of the Church. His coarse, much patched, and darned blouse was wet through, for apparently he had no umbrella, and a broad-brimmed grey hat was crushed between his two horny hands, which he held clasped together on his breast, and in an attitude of agonised entreaty. With head high uplifted, and eyes staring, as it were, through the very roof above him, the uncouth-looking Breton poured forth the ever-recurring "Libera me" with tremendous force, and in a strangely funereal tone. When the procession was ended, Prosper retired to a vacant corner close to a lateral door right opposite the pulpit, and knelt down upon the pavement, seemingly having no place upon any of the wooden benches.

Somewhat before ten o'clock the real congregation began to pour in, and Monsieur le Maire took his place in the carved oak state-pew in front of the pulpit, where, on worm-eaten old chairs, covered with moth-eaten red velvet, the notables and worthies of the parish were entitled to sit. M. de Vérancour and Richard Prévost, by

reason of their importance in the parochial administration, sat there also. In the centre of the church were ranged the various heads of the society of D——, chiefly remarkable from the different degrees of richness of their respective prie-dieus. There was the doctor and his mother, wife, and children, and the notary with his wife, and the schoolmaster, and the hotel-keeper, and the Juge de Paix, with his wife and a lanky boy. The Juge de Paix, who was a "philosophe," was remarkable for never kneeling; he went to church because that was fitting in his position, but he stood when others knelt, and thought that this conciliated personal independence with respect for the forms honoured by the State.

When the Curé mounted the altar-steps and began to recite the "Introibo," there was not a person of any note in the town absent from the church. Madame Jean, in very handsome mourning, had, on the whole, the finest prie-dieu of all,—tapestry work, red poppies, blue corn-flowers, and a white cross in the middle. The Brigadier de Gendarmerie was splendidly got up.

When the terrible chant of the "Dies Iræ" wailed and moaned through the church, many a head was bowed down, and although nothing could exceed the discordance of the sounds on which the awful words were borne, and although the drone of the serpent, out of tune and out of time, and confided to the musical aptitudes of a fanatical cobbler, verged upon the ridiculous, nothing seemed felt but the dread of the future and the grief for the lost. Poor little Vévette was observed to sob bitterly as she hid her head in her handkerchief, and both old Morville and his son Raoul covered their faces with their hats. Richard Prévost was pale, and looked ill, and old Prosper, still on his knees in his corner, was intent upon his large-beaded rosary, and mumbled over it like one of the cripples in his own province on his way to a "pardon."

When the Gospel had been read, the Curé ascended the pulpit, and, as is the custom in country churches, prepared to address a few words to his hearers upon the special import of the day's service.

The Curé was no orator, and he knew it, and never attempted to make elaborate discourses, which, had they been the finest in the world, would have been lost upon his hearers. His sermons were generally short and to the point, and merely aimed at impressing his auditory with the reality and comprehensibility of the Christian doctrine, and at bringing home to their minds the true sense of whatever might be the particular lesson of the day.

His subject on this 2nd of November was all ready found;—it was Death. Few among us who have passed their childhood do not respond to the melancholy of that theme! And so the congregation of the church of D—— listened to the Curé's homely words with rapt attention, and dwelt anew in anguish upon the beloved who were for ever gone.

"For ever!" There was the mystery—the terror or the hope; and there, of course, the priest, full of faith, strove to bring over every individual listener to grasp, as it were, with his hand the reasons for believing. Stifled sobs and low wailings answered his appeal, and no eloquence was needed to touch even the most rugged hearts in this one point where all had suffered. The howling of the wind without, and the plashing of the rain, made a gloomy accompaniment to the scene.

When his short address was nearly ended, the Curé paused, and then in a few sentences adverted to the horrible crime by which the hitherto peaceful town had been affrighted,—the murder of Martin Prévost. "We have not only felt the grief and the sorrow of death," said he, "but the terror of death has visited us;—death in its most dreadful form, the form of murder! And the murderer is unpunished, unsuspected!"

And then, leaning forwards upon the cushion in front of the pulpit, and speaking more slowly than before, he thus continued his discourse:—"I would wish you all," said he with extreme earnestness, "to study the last words of to-day's Gospel, for you will see how they apply to the terrible mystery which so shocks us all." Placing his finger upon the page of the book open before him—"Listen!" he added; "'For the hour will come in which all who are in their tombs will hear the voice of the Son of God. And those who have acted righteously will arise, and theirs shall be the resurrection to life; and those who have done evil will also arise, but only to be judged.' Now, my brethren, these are not vain words; these are facts. It is good you should look upon them as such. We are regretful at this moment that the evil-doer should have escaped, for his escape might have called down wrong and misery upon the innocent, and it is God's mercy alone which has allowed it to be clearly proved that among our neighbours stands no murderer: but, my brethren, the evil-doer has not escaped; it is but a reprieve;—it is only for a few months, or weeks, or days. He cannot escape, my brethren; no one can escape; for when that hour of which we are told strikes, the murderer will rise, but by his side will be the man he murdered! Perhaps even now he is trying to forget, perhaps he has forgotten; but the hour will come,—come as surely as that I am standing here,—and when he gets out of his grave he will see over again what he hoped never to see more. He will see the blood-stained head and face; and the eyes, whose death-glare he did not see, will stare at him, and Martin Prévost will clutch his hand and lead him up to the eternal tribunal. They will stand there together face to face."

These words, whereby the Curé had merely intended to impress on his hearers the certainty of retribution, and the matter-of-fact truth of Gospel teachings, seemed to have struck a strange terror into the entire congregation. The remainder of mass was attended to in

silence, and the departing crowd exchanged silent greetings on the threshold of the church. The wind still howled pitifully, and the rain beat against the windows, and the lowering grey sky looked like a pall.

When the last parishioner had departed, Raoul de Morville left his father's side and went back into the church to fetch the prayer-book he had mislaid upon his chair. "Why, Prosper, what's the matter?" he exclaimed, as, on turning round to go out by the side-door, he saw the woodcutter still on his knees, with his rosary in his hand, but motionless. The man's head was thrown back, and rested upon the stone carvings of the holy-water font; his eyes were wide open, and so was his mouth; but nor look nor breath nor sound came from either. His fingers were closed tightly over his beads. He was apparently in a trance or a fit.

Raoul shook him, and threw water from the font over him, but he was some minutes before he recalled him to himself. When consciousness did return, he shrank from Raoul as from a reptile, gathered himself up, and, quivering with fear, fixed his dull, scared look upon Raoul with an expression of horror quite indescribable.

The beadle came by to see that no one lingered in the church, and young Morville recommended the Breton to his care.

In the end Prosper consented to rise and make his way out of the church, but he went alone, fiercely resenting any attempts to lead him out with an inarticulate groan, and with a look that at once was full of hatred and terror. The beadle shrugged his shoulders. "The old fellow's head never was good for much," he mumbled; "and what with the murder and his own imprisonment, it's all topsy-turvy now,—il a déménagé, pauvre bonhomme!" and the beadle tapped his forehead with his fat forefinger.

ENGLAND'S PLACE IN EUROPE.

THE year now fast ebbing away has seen a further development of those changes in the political system of Europe which have been in progress during the last few years, and which must have the most important results upon the international relations of the European Powers. The treaties of 1815 and the political combinations upon which the balance of power was founded after the end of the great Napoleonic wars, lasted for nearly half a century. They might have been framed with greater wisdom and foresight, and with a more statesmanlike appreciation of the wants and aspirations of the nations with which they dealt. Arbitrary as they were, with regard to the rights and feelings of peoples, and, consequently, full of the seeds of future discord, and inadequate to maintain beyond a limited period the perpetual peace which they professed to establish, yet they have been productive of many signal benefits to mankind. They preserved Europe for nearly fifty years from great and devastating wars. The comparative repose which they ensured has led to the rapid spread of those principles which have ended in the triumph of free trade, and to the more general and unrestricted intercourse between nations, and has given time for that progress in science and education which has led to discoveries of such incalculable value to the human race.

The doctrine of "the balance of power," although scoffed at by certain politicians of a new school, is founded upon a wise and beneficent principle. It applies to governments and a state of civilisation which still look to war alone as the arbiter of international disputes, and as the sole source of national greatness. As Sir James Mackintosh has justly said, "It is a system which provides for the security of all states by balancing the force and opposing the interests of great ones; the independence of nations is the end, the balance of power is only the means." Unfortunately, the application of the principle of the balance of power by the treaties of 1815 was capricious and partial. The chief aim of the statesmen assembled at Vienna was to bridle France, the restless ambition of whose ruler had plunged Europe into a series of terrible wars, from the effects of which she was acutely suffering. They heartily despised "the jargon of nationalities." They would not even consider the rights and sympathies and traditions of nations, as opposed to the claims of governments and princes. The political fabric raised by the treaties of Vienna was so frail that it could only be upheld so long as the parties to them remained in the

same political condition, and were prepared to hold together to enforce them. But they were inconsistent with that development of literature, of knowledge, and of science, which peace was calculated to produce. The boundaries and divisions they created between states were entirely artificial, and could only be maintained by arms. When one of the parties to those treaties, with the connivance and consent of any other party, violated their stipulations, the whole necessarily tottered to the ground. The last blow to them was given by the present Emperor of the French, when he declared that the treaties of Vienna were torn up, and announced himself as the apostle of the doctrine of nationalities. But that which he intended for the advantage of France threatens to have the very opposite effect. A far stronger bridle will be placed upon her ambition and her power by the consequent changes in the political system of Europe, than any that could have been devised by the statesmen of 1815.

Although the engagements entered into by the treaties of Vienna had been more than once set at nought,—as by Austria in the case of Cracow, and by Russia in that of Poland, yet the first great overthrow of the principles upon which they were founded was the establishment of the kingdom of Italy. For the first time since the readjustment of the balance of power in 1815, a new kingdom of the first order was called into existence in Europe, and a new element thus added to the political system. The balance of power as devised in 1815 was consequently seriously disturbed, if not absolutely destroyed. Italian unity, although indirectly the work of the Emperor Napoleon, was effected in spite of him. Men of all political parties in France saw, in the rise of this new kingdom on her frontier, a menace and a danger to that pre-eminence which she had acquired amongst the nations of the world. It was deplorable to see such men as M. Thiers, and other statesmen of liberal and constitutional opinions, ready to condemn the Italian people to perpetual servitude, and to crush the noblest aspirations of freedom, merely because, according to their views, it did not suit the interests and dignity of France that Italy should become a strong and independent nation. But the establishment of the kingdom of Italy wrought a greater danger to France than that of the rise of a new Power upon her borders,—a danger which even statesmen of the sagacity of M. Thiers did not foresee. It was the first successful assertion of the principle of nationalities, which upset at once all the artificial checks and counter-checks of the balance of power as devised by the treaties of Vienna, and showed the way to the establishment of a far greater and more formidable empire on the frontiers of France—a united Germany.

The immediate cause of the supremacy of Prussia in Germany, and consequently of German unity, was an egregious blunder and miscalculation on the part of the Emperor of the French in his policy

in the Danish question. From the Danish war in 1864 may date the great change which has taken place in the political system of Europe.

The policy and conduct of Lord Russell, and, consequently, of the Government of which he was a member, in this Danish question, are still so unjustly assailed and condemned, that it is really important to make a few facts known to our readers. A solemn treaty regulating the succession to the Danish throne had been entered into, in 1852, between Austria, Denmark, France, England, Prussia, Russia, and Sweden. It was a treaty founded upon the old erroneous principles of 1815, and it is to be earnestly hoped that it is the last treaty of the kind into which this country will ever enter. But with the origin of the treaty of 1852 Lord Palmerston's Government had nothing to do. They found themselves tied by solemn international engagements, which, if a treaty be worth anything, they were bound by law and in honour to respect. Both Germany and Denmark had violated pledges which they had reciprocally given. Lord Russell, performing a duty, and exercising an undoubted right, addressed in the interests of peace remonstrances to each. Those remonstrances, it is declared, were meddlesome, and unnecessarily threatening and harsh. But they were precisely the same as those employed by France, who held the same position as England, and they were used in every instance in conjunction with or with the sanction of the French Government. The Liberal party in Germany, and Count Bismark, who availed himself of its support in order to carry out his own ulterior policy, were bent upon annexing the German population of Holstein and Schleswig. Austria, according to her usual habit, adopted the most shortsighted and suicidal course; and, endeavouring to outbid her rival in maintaining an influence in Germany, gave her sanction to the violation of the treaty of 1852 and the spoliation of Denmark. It was then that Lord Russell wrote the despatch, which party malevolence, personal rancour, and ignorance or perversion of facts, have converted into an invitation to France and Russia to join with England in a war against Germany, from which we were only saved by the refusal of the French Government to act with us. This is one of those statements which threaten in the course of time to be accepted as history, and which, it is assumed, admit neither of discussion nor question. And yet what are the true facts of the case? It was notorious that Prussia and Austria had determined to violate the treaty of 1852. The question then arose how far England was called upon to uphold it. It was evident that, as only one of seven parties to a joint engagement, or guarantee, we were not under the obligation to enforce it alone if the other parties to it refused to do so; but it was equally clear that if our joint-guarantors were ready to support the treaty, even by actual war, we should have been bound by every rule of morals and law to act with them. In order,

therefore, to determine the extent of our own obligations and duty, it was absolutely necessary to ascertain how far the other parties to the treaty were prepared to go. It was for this purpose that Lord Russell addressed his despatch, not to France and Russia, as it is generally assumed, but to those Powers and to Austria, Prussia, and Sweden,—in fact, to all the parties to the treaty who were under the same obligations as ourselves,—asking them whether they were prepared "to concert and co-operate with Great Britain for the purpose of maintaining the engagements of the treaty of 1852, and of upholding the integrity of the Danish monarchy." It is evident that this step was the one best calculated to save England from a war, and not to plunge her into one. Had France and Russia replied that they were prepared at any risk to enforce the stipulations of the treaty, neither Austria nor Prussia would have ventured to invade the Danish territory. If our co-guarantors refused to stand by the terms of the treaty, we were relieved from our joint engagements. France and Russia declined to give material aid to Denmark. England was, therefore, relieved from doing so. War ensued. Denmark was invaded, and soon succumbed to the united forces of the two great German Powers.

We have said that from the Danish war may be dated the final break-down of that political system and the balance of power which was devised by the statesmen of 1815. It is somewhat curious to trace the consequences to those who were concerned in the violation of the treaty of 1852, and in bringing about that war. Austria owes to the part she took in it her exclusion from the Germanic Confederation, her fall as a German Power, the loss of her remaining Italian provinces, and those internal political changes which, in all human probability, must end in the total break-up of the Austrian Empire as constituted in 1815. The smaller German governments, dragged into it by their fear of the extreme democratic party, and by the craft of Count Bismark, will owe to it their extinction and their absorption into Prussia. France owes to it the utter defeat of her long-cherished hopes with regard to Poland, and the formation of a great homogeneous and powerful empire on her frontiers, which puts an end for ever to her ambitious designs for the extension of her boundaries to the Rhine, and takes from her that predominance in the councils of Europe which she had taught herself to consider her right. What the eventual result to Prussia may be, it may be difficult yet to prophesy. At present she appears to be the only party to the treaty of 1852 who has profited by its violation. But it remains to be seen whether she, too, may not, in the end, trace her fall as an independent and separate kingdom to the Danish war. When history comes to be truthfully and impartially written it will be recorded, to the honour of England, that she was the only Power ready to maintain the faith of solemn engagements; and the reputation of Lord

Russell as a statesman will not suffer from the part he took in the Danish question.

The quarrels between Prussia and Austria arising out of the Danish war, ending in the great Prussian victories of 1866, the exclusion of Austria for ever from Germany, and the establishment of the Italian kingdom, have completely changed the political system of Europe. The small states, which it had been the great object of statesmen of a past generation to create and to foster as the best security for the peace of the world, and as the surest check upon the extension of great military empires, have for the most part disappeared, or are rapidly disappearing. Those which still remain will be allowed to exist upon sufferance, and can be of little or no account in the affairs of Europe. They have been succeeded by great empires or kingdoms, founded upon that principle of nationalities which only a few years ago was ridiculed and despised by statesmen who were unable to understand the altered times in which they lived. Two great states have been added to the European political system, and the whole fabric of the balance of power, so cunningly and carefully devised by the framers of the treaties of 1815, has crumbled to the dust.

To the philosophic observer of these events the first question which will suggest itself is this—will civilisation, and human freedom, happiness, and progress, be promoted by these vast changes? The history of the past is undoubtedly in favour of small states and against great empires. The highest development in the arts and sciences, and in the true principles of human progress, has taken place in small states, whether under a monarchical or republican form of government. This development has been checked and frequently stopped altogether by their absorption into large and powerful military empires. The history of Greece, of Rome, of Italy, of Germany, abundantly proves this. But the conditions upon which great empires are now formed are completely changed. They no longer depend upon conquest and power of dominion, nor are defined by mere arbitrary political boundaries, but rest upon the principle of the aggregation of peoples speaking the same tongue and having the same literature, and consequently under the influence to a great extent of the same sentiments, opinions, traditions, and aspirations. Consequently the past may no longer be the criterion of the future. The danger to peace, and consequently to civilisation and human progress, lies in the tendency of great states to become military empires, and to absorb and conquer weaker states which are adjacent to them, and whose institutions are more liberal and free than their own. And this danger is especially to be apprehended in Europe, where traditionary rivalries and jealousies, and the fatal ambition to have vast standing armies, are unfortunately still rife, and where the contest between popular government and arbitrary rule is still going on.

But to the practical statesman the most immediate and urgent

question is—how far will the balance of power in Europe, the undue and dangerous aggrandisement of any one Power, and the probability of war or peace, be affected by these changes? We are inclined to believe that the balance of power and "the European equilibrium" is more likely to be preserved than to be destroyed by the formation of several great Powers in Europe, and by the disappearance of a number of small states, artificially constructed, with no internal elements of cohesion, and consequently with no real elements of stability, such as were called into existence by the treaties of 1815. If such should be the case, the probability of war would be diminished, and there would be less to fear from the undue aggrandisement of any one Power.

The greatest danger to the peace of Europe has arisen in modern times from the ambition and military power of France. Although she emerged crippled in her strength from the great war, and found herself controlled and shorn of her territory by the treaty of Vienna, yet, owing to the activity and intelligence of her people, and to the weakness of the states by which she has been surrounded, she had again become the leading state on the continent, and her influence was all powerful. From that position she has unquestionably fallen, and her power of regaining it has become improbable, if not impossible, by the formation of the Italian kingdom on her south-eastern frontiers, and by the consolidation of German unity on her northern borders. Every Frenchman, whatever may be his political creed, appears to feel this, and to resent it as an affront to the national dignity and an injustice and injury to France. And the conviction is becoming every day more general and more profound, that France owes the position in which she has been placed to the policy pursued by the Emperor. Men had been accustomed to praise his political sagacity and wisdom until they had persuaded themselves that he possessed the highest qualities of a ruler and a statesman. Yet the faults he has committed in directing the foreign policy of France,—with the administration of her internal affairs we have here no concern,—are about the gravest of which a ruler could be guilty. In the Crimean war he deserted England,—the ally to whom he owed most and from whom he might have expected most,—at the moment when complete success might have been obtained, and when the sources of future wars might have been removed. He threw himself wantonly into the arms of Russia, and contributed to restore that very influence and those very means of aggression which had led to the Crimean war, and which may again disturb the peace of Europe. His conduct alienated England, and led indirectly to the destruction of Polish nationality in spite of the sympathies of the French nation for that unhappy people. When it was too late he saw his error and abandoned his policy, forfeiting his reputation for wisdom and forethought. The duplicity of his conduct in the affair of Savoy and Nice

destroyed all confidence in his honour and his word. The expedition to Mexico, commenced in fraud, carried on in dishonour, and ending in disgrace, has destroyed the influence and prestige of France in the new world and has lowered them in the old. The Roman convention has placed France in a position which threatens to make an enemy of a nation which ought to be bound to her by ties of gratitude. His policy in the Danubian Principalities, carried on with a bad faith incredible to those who were not behind the scenes, only served the cause of Russia, and gave an additional arm to Prussia against Austria in the late war. And finally, his intrigues with Count Bismark, when he persuaded himself that he had cajoled that statesman, and his entire miscalculation of the relative strength of Prussia and Austria, and of the issue of the struggle between them, have led to the eventual formation of a great German Empire which may destroy for ever the ascendancy of France in Europe.

These convictions are rapidly spreading amongst the French people, and hence one of the chief dangers to the peace of Europe. Either the Emperor, in order to regain his popularity and his lost prestige, and to save his dynasty, which is seriously threatened, may have recourse to the last and dangerous expedient of a war with Germany, or the French people themselves may force upon him or his successor, whoever he may be, such a war, in order to re-establish the military credit and superiority of France, which no Frenchman will be inclined to renounce without a struggle.

But such a war could be of little profit to France, and the risk to her and the Emperor would be enormous. If she were defeated the consequences to him and his dynasty would be fatal. If she came out victorious she would gain nothing. Whether she annexed German territory or contented herself with the barren glories of a victorious campaign, she would sow the seeds of unextinguishable hatred against her in the German race, whose future destinies she cannot now control, which is acquiring day by day strength and unity, and which would seize the first opportunity of regaining its lost territory.

The great German people has now undoubtedly become the most important element in the political system of Europe. The Prussian monarchy will in all probability be ultimately absorbed, and her punishment as a nation for the violation of the treaty of 1852, and her share in the Danish war, will then come. That the most enlightened and the most educated race of continental Europe will soon be united into one people under one government, no one who has watched the progress of events, and who understands the signs of the times, can doubt. But we believe it to be an error to suppose that Count Bismark is hurrying on the completion of German unity by the addition of the southern states to Prussia. He disclaimed this intention in his interviews with the Emperor Napoleon at Paris last summer, whilst he did not conceal

his inability to oppose a popular movement in Germany which might have this end for its object. He is too sagacious a statesman not to know that to incorporate into Prussia, before the north of Germany is fully consolidated, a portion of the German race differing from her fundamentally in their religious institutions, and to a considerable extent in political tendencies, could only be a source of danger to the Prussian monarchy. The smaller states which have united themselves to Prussia, and have supported the policy of Count Bismark, have not done so from any love of Prussia and her institutions, but on account of an irresistible longing for national union, and an earnest conviction of their weakness and insignificance in the European system whilst divided. These national sentiments have been much strengthened by the policy of France towards Germany, and by the language of the French press. The political institutions of Prussia, the reactionary tendencies of her aristocracy and her Government, the overbearing conduct of her officials, the severity of her military service, and her taxation, are hateful to a very large portion of the German people, who are, however, ready to submit for the time to all these evils, if by doing so they can accomplish their national unity, and assert for the German race that position and influence in Europe to which they justly believe themselves entitled. But there is a leven of opposition to Prussia,—a leven of democracy, of republicanism,—fermenting in the national mind, especially in central Germany. This antagonism to Prussia would be greatly increased, and would become more dangerous to her by the union of the Catholic states, when the fears of a war with France were passed, and the German people commenced seriously to organise themselves as a nation, and to settle the principles and form of government under which they were prepared to live. It would be difficult to predict at this time how soon German unity will be completed. Much will depend upon the course pursued by France towards Germany. Every step that she may take for the purpose of checking the completion of German unity will probably have precisely the contrary effect. The threat of interference and war would at once lead to its immediate accomplishment. But sooner or later Prussia may be absorbed and lost in a united German people, either forming a Germanic empire, or that which is far more likely, a German community under democratic institutions—the first great European republic.

The position which Austria is destined to hold in Europe is much more doubtful. How far the present tentative policy of the Austrian Government will succeed yet remains to be seen. That she can ever re-acquire the influence she once exercised, and which she owed to the artificial system of the balance of power devised at Vienna, seems out of the question. Her very existence as a nation is opposed to the principle of nationalities upon which states will henceforward be based. If to any nation Metternich's famous definition of Italy—

that she was a geographical expression—can be applied, it is to the Austria of his own creation. The very concessions which the Austrian Government has made—wise and necessary as they are—must lead to the dissolution of the empire as now constituted. Hungary, with free representative institutions, can only show the way to other nationalities to withdraw themselves from the direct control of the central government at Vienna. The popular movement which has long agitated Bohemia is acquiring strength every day, and threatens to end, ere long, in the assertion of Czech nationality, which will aim at an independence of its own, either in connection with other Sclavic races now included within the Austrian Empire, or—and this would be a more serious danger to Austria—to a union with the kindred peoples under Russian sway. Those intrigues which Russia so well knows how to foment and direct, are actively at work amongst the populations of Bohemia and Galicia and are already bearing fruits. Whilst these elements of dissolution are at work amongst two great sections of the inhabitants of the Austrian Empire, its German populations are turning their eyes towards the national movement now taking place in central Europe, with which they sympathise and into which they will ultimately be drawn. The Austrian Government has never succeeded in conciliating the various races included within the empire. Indeed, it would seem that, until very recently, it never aimed at doing so. There are no elements of union and strength left to Austria. Her fall, and the formation of new states out of her varied populations, seem to be but a question of time.

That which forms the weakness of Austria is the source of strength to Italy,—the principle of nationalities. Italy, with all the dangers that encompass her, has this vital element to uphold her, and, whatever may be the perils and trials through which she will have to pass, her future, as an independent, powerful, and united people, is secure. Some still believe that the discontent which now makes itself heard through a free press arises from a desire to return to the old state of things. Nothing can be more erroneous. The sentiment of national unity has sunk too deep into the Italian mind to be shaken by misgovernment. Vices in the ruling body may strengthen the Republican party, but will not bring back petty princes, and a subdivision of Italy into small states. Her unity will be completed by the addition of Rome. A satisfactory settlement of this Roman question, we have good grounds for believing, would have been speedily brought about with the concurrence of the Italian Government and the liberal party in Rome, and with the tacit consent of the Emperor of the French, had it not been for the untoward enterprise of Garibaldi, from which his best friends, and even the Roman leaders themselves, in vain endeavoured to dissuade him. As it is, he has compelled the Emperor to send troops to Italy, he has placed the Italian Government in the greatest embarrassment, and the country in the utmost peril. But

whatever may have been the immediate result of this infatuated perverseness, the Roman question must be settled. Its present state is inconsistent with the dignity, the independence, nay, the very existence of the Italian kingdom. It is equally dangerous to France and her Emperor. No free nation could tolerate in the midst of her territories a prince supported by foreign bayonets, who excommunicates her king, anathematises her parliament, and releases her people from their obedience to the laws. To say that the Roman people are satisfied with their lot is to show wilful ignorance of the condition of the Roman states, and of the fact that very many thousands of the most honourable and intelligent Roman citizens are living in exile. If they did not respond to the ill-advised and reckless attempt of Garibaldi, it was because they were too sensible and too patriotic to embarrass their friends, and to run the risk of plunging their country into a disastrous war,—not because they are not ready to combine with Italy to achieve their independence and national unity. The temporal power of the Pope must cease. France and Italy are now brought face to face. It is equally necessary to both that the struggle with the Papacy should end. If the settlement of the Roman question must be referred to the European Powers, we trust that the voice of England will make itself heard on the side of free Italy. It would have been so heard had we a liberal Government. And this would be neither interference nor intervention, but the legitimate exercise of her influence as a great European Power.

In the altered state of Europe that we have described, and with further changes impending, what are the position and policy of England? The place of this country in the political system is no longer what it was between the peace of 1815 and the Danish war. During that interval she may claim to have held the first rank amongst nations, and to have controlled the destinies of the world. It was a great and glorious position; and, on the whole, it was used, except during one or two periods of reactionary administrations, for the advancement of human freedom and of the welfare of the human race. It has become the fashion, amongst certain politicians of a new school, and those who ape their language from interested motives or from ignorance, to speak more than disparagingly of Lord Palmerston. But whilst his reputation as the representative during a very long period of our foreign policy may have fallen in England for the time, it has risen elsewhere. Those who knew him best, and who were brought into relations of public business with him, could appreciate his great qualities as a statesman;—his ardent love of liberty, his detestation of tyranny and arbitrary rule under whatever form and wherever they might exist, his resolute desire to curb the dangerous ambition of military despotisms, his hatred of war, and yet his readiness to encounter its evils rather than to sacrifice the honour, dignity, and interests of his country, his confidence in the power and great-

ness of England, and his good sense, skill, judgment, and firmness, in dealing with the most delicate and difficult international questions. Any nation might have been proud of such a minister, whose name was familiar amongst races the most remote, and who had made his country feared and respected throughout the world. But the foreign policy of Lord Palmerston, however wise and effective during a certain period, was founded upon the principles which were embodied in the treaties of 1815, and upon the political system which they were intended to maintain. It was no longer a practicable policy after the Danish war and its results, which finally destroyed those treaties. Men, forgetting the changed state of Europe, or ignorant of what went before, condemn a policy which, necessary and wise at one time, is no longer so under a new condition of things. For nearly half a century it was the duty of England to maintain, as far as possible, the European equilibrium as established by the treaties of 1815, of which she was one of the guardians, in order to check the undue aggrandisement of any one Power, and to prevent fresh wars of conquest and ambition. It was at the same time her task to favour the development of freedom and popular institutions throughout Europe. With the establishment of a united Germany, and of a kingdom of Italy, there was less necessity for her interference in European affairs, and consequently her paramount influence, to a great extent, ceased. We must not conceal from ourselves that under these circumstances she can no longer maintain that high and exceptional position amongst the nations of the world that she so long enjoyed. But that she still holds, and will continue to hold, a great position, and will enjoy the influence which belongs to a state of the first rank,—supposing always that our foreign policy is wise and worthy of the country,—there can be no reason to doubt. Her vast empire, her powerful fleet, and, more than all, her free institutions, and the indomitable energy and valour of her people, will ensure this place to her. But her influence and strength will hereafter be most felt and will be best used if we abstain, as much as possible, from interference in the quarrels and concerns of other nations, but if we are ready at the same time to throw that influence and strength when necessary into the scale on the side of justice and popular rights.

A great deal of nonsense has of late been talked about "non-intervention and non-interference," and the phrase that "England should not interfere in foreign affairs unless her honour or her interests require it," has been put forward as some newly discovered principle, and threatens even to become the watchword of a political party. That any state pretending to hold the rank of a first-rate Power, and being one of the leading members of the European family of nations, should openly declare the fundamental maxim of its foreign policy to be abstinence from all interference in the political affairs of the

continent, is simply absurd. Moreover, the ostentatious profession of such a policy is absolutely mischievous and dangerous, and far more likely to lead to war than to ensure peace. England has never interfered in the affairs of other nations, unless, in the opinion of those who had the direction of her policy at the time, and, indeed, of the country itself, "her honour and her interests" required it. The real question is, how far any particular event may, directly or indirectly, affect them. That which may have been essential to the honour and interests of England fifty years ago, may be so no longer. There can be no doubt that, as we have shown, the great political changes which have recently occurred in Europe have rendered necessary a corresponding change in our foreign policy. The interference and intervention of England in continental affairs is less necessary or desirable now than it was previous to those changes. It is simply untrue and ridiculous to say, as it is somewhat the fashion to say, that the debates in the House of Commons on the Danish question, and the expression of public opinion they elicited, put an end to a mischievous and meddling foreign policy which had been for years pursued by our foreign ministers,—by such statesmen as Lord Palmerston, Lord Russell, and Lord Clarendon. The time may come when our honour and interests may again require a more active foreign policy; and to lay it down as a maxim that we are not to intervene or interfere for the future in European affairs, is to show an absolute ignorance of our true position as a nation, and a lamentable indifference to the greatness and independence of England.

This fallacy about the Danish debate, first put forward by the radical party in the House of Commons, has since been taken up by the conservative party, unmindful that they urged the Government of Lord Palmerston to interfere in the Danish question even to the extent of war. A contrast is attempted to be drawn between this "mischievous and meddlesome" foreign policy of liberal Governments, of Lord Palmerston and Lord Russell, and the administration of the Foreign Office under Lord Stanley, very much to the advantage of the Ministry of Lord Derby. It is really of importance, now that the challenge has been given, that the truth should be known in this matter. Indeed, it is the duty of those who profess liberal opinions to ascertain whether it be true that the foreign policy pursued by a liberal Government has been so bad, and that initiated by a conservative Government so good; whether Lord Stanley be entitled to the praise so liberally bestowed upon him by his party, and concurred in by many Liberals, at the expense of his predecessors. We have no wish to detract from the merits of Lord Stanley; but we are bound under the circumstances to ascertain the truth.

When Lord Stanley succeeded Lord Clarendon in the Foreign Office, he was a professed follower of Mr. Cobden's doctrine of non-intervention and non-interference, and of the peculiar opinions of his

school about the use of a foreign policy and of diplomacy. He is reported to have said that there could and ought to be nothing to be done in the Foreign Office, which was little more than a department of the state for the reception and transmission of letters. The levity with which he treated foreign questions astonished and alarmed the foreign representatives at our Court. But all this arose from ignorance and inexperience. He was too sensible a man not to perceive very soon that there were vast and multifarious interests connected with the foreign relations of this country which required in their right treatment the highest combination of knowledge, wisdom, experience, and judgment. A very short apprenticeship taught him the fallacy of the new doctrine about non-intervention and non-interference. He soon found himself in the face of international difficulties which could not be avoided. Let us see how he dealt with them.

The principal foreign questions of which Parliament has had any knowledge during Lord Stanley's administration, are the "Alabama" claims, the Luxembourg guarantee, the case of the "Mermaid," the seizure of the "Tornado" and imprisonment of her crew, and the revolution in Crete.

It is broadly stated that Lord Stanley has shown a far more liberal, conciliatory, and statesmanlike spirit than Lord Russell in agreeing to submit the claims of the United States to arbitration. Now, in the first place, Lord Russell never refused an arbitration upon American claims, provided a case for arbitration could be agreed upon between the two Governments. In his despatch of the 14th October, 1865, he left an opening to Mr. Seward to propose such a case. In the second place, Lord Russell, in his treatment of the "Alabama" and other claims, followed the only precedent which was available, viz., that set by the United States themselves with regard to claims of exactly the same nature preferred against them by Portugal, adopting in his despatches and correspondence the very same arguments and frequently the identical language which had been used by the American Government. And thirdly, not only had Lord Derby in the House of Lords, and the principal organs of public opinion in this country, entirely approved of the course which Lord Russell had taken with regard to the "Alabama" claims, but the opposition of the conservative party in Parliament, and the violent attacks led by Lord Cairns upon the measures taken by Lord Palmerston's Government to check the violation of our neutrality, by endeavouring to stop the fitting out of the "Alabama" and other cruisers against the commerce of the United States, encouraged the violation of our laws, and would have rendered all concession to the American Government utterly impossible. When Lord Derby came into office, he and his friends changed their opinions upon foreign politics, as they did upon reform, and they now would claim credit for doing that which, through their unscrupulous opposition, their predecessors could not have done. Lord Stanley proposed arbitration on the

"Alabama" and other claims, to the United States. The result of his proposal was precisely what Lord Russell,—who, however, generously gave it his support,—had anticipated. It is impossible to agree upon the case to be submitted to arbitrators. Mr. Seward insists upon including in the matters for discussion and arbitration our conduct in recognising the belligerent rights of the Southern States. No Government with any respect for its dignity and independence could accept such a proposal, and Lord Stanley has been compelled to leave the question where it was when he came into office.

Now as regards Luxembourg. France and Prussia were on the brink of war. The Emperor Napoleon was most desirous of avoiding this extremity, and ready to avail himself of any fair pretext to escape it. He hinted to our ambassador at Paris that an offer of mediation on the part of England might afford him the pretext. Although Europe would thus be preserved from a war, the results of which, even to this country, no one could foresee, at little or no risk or sacrifice on our part, Lord Stanley hesitated to offer the mediation proposed by the Emperor, and it was only owing to the urgent representations of Lord Cowley that he was led to do so at the very last moment. If there had been twelve more hours' delay, war would have broken out, or another Power would have accepted the honourable task which had been proposed to England. The conference held in London agreed to a joint guarantee to secure the neutrality of Luxembourg. For a moment the influence of England in Europe seemed to have revived. But, questioned in the House of Commons upon the extent of the responsibility imposed upon this country by the guarantee, Lord Stanley had the incredible want of prudence—not to call it by a harsher name—to declare, in almost so many words, that when entering into that guarantee he did so with the mental reservation that he never intended to fulfil any of the obligations which it might impose upon us! The effect of this declaration in Europe must be well known even to Lord Stanley's friends. It excited feelings of the deepest indignation throughout Germany. It has destroyed on the continent Lord Stanley's reputation as a statesman, and has most seriously shaken the confidence which had previously been felt in the honour and word of England.

The "Mermaid" was a British trading vessel which had been sunk by a shot from a Spanish battery. Lord Stanley, in the debate upon this question in the House of Commons, admitted to the fullest extent the arbitrary and illegal proceedings of the Spanish Government and authorities, and asserted the undoubted claim of the British Government to redress. But he stated at the same time that he would not enforce our right, upon these most unstatesmanlike, we might almost say immoral, grounds,—viz., that we might ourselves hereafter be wrong-doers, and that Spain would then have claims against us which we might set against those which we now have against her. It

is difficult to conceive a declaration more derogatory to the dignity of a nation, and more likely to encourage injuries and insults on the part of such a Government as that of Spain.

In the case of the "Tornado" we are willing to overlook any shortcomings of the Minister,—and there might be something to say on the subject,—on account of the flagrant violation of our law and the discreditable conduct of the owners of the vessel, who deserve neither our sympathy nor our support.

In the Eastern question Lord Stanley, notwithstanding his previous opinions and his supposed philo-Greek predilections, upon which the opponents of the Eastern policy of Lord Palmerston thought they could rely, found himself under the necessity of following the same course as his predecessors, and refused to aid the enemies of Turkey in their schemes to dismember the Turkish Empire.

In what, then, would we ask, has Lord Stanley shown that superiority over those who preceded him at the Foreign Office, and that statesmanlike wisdom, which have called forth such unlimited praise from his party, and which, we are constantly told, even his political opponents are compelled to admit? It would be most unjust to the liberal party, and to the distinguished statesmen who held the seals of the Foreign Office when that party was in power, if such assertions should be allowed to pass uncontroverted.

No one who has watched the career of Lord Stanley can fail to perceive that he has no foreign policy, no definite views and aims with regard to the foreign relations of this country, no principles to guide him. His foreign policy has hitherto consisted in meeting questions as they arise, or in avoiding them if possible, and in making statements and giving answers to questions in the House of Commons in a practical, common-sense fashion, which never fails to raise cheers from a certain class of politicians. The want of a definite foreign policy, the mere living from hand to mouth, and the dealing with questions upon the ground of immediate expediency and not upon principle,, or with a far-seeing and intelligent appreciation of the general interests of the country, whether immediate or remote, are sure signs of the decay of a nation, and of its fall from the position of a first-rate Power. Lord Palmerston had a foreign policy, and all international questions with which he dealt were treated upon certain principles and with broad and definite views as to what was necessary for the dignity, interests, and influence of the country. It was to this that during his administration of foreign affairs England owed her greatness and her high place in the world. France has a national foreign policy, and so has Russia, and Prussia, and even Italy. Austria is gradually abandoning all definite principles in her foreign relations, as we are doing. Holland and Spain have long since given up a foreign policy. They are decaying or fallen states. Let us take care that England be not reduced to the same condition.

The most extraordinary perversion and confusion of ideas seem to prevail with regard to the United States in this matter of a foreign policy. Those who advocate the extreme doctrines of non-interference and non-intervention, and ridicule the notion of the balance of power, point to the example of the United States as the one to be followed by England. But have they any grounds for doing so? It is true that the United States have hitherto interfered but little in the affairs of European states, although symptoms are not wanting of a departure in this respect from the rules wisely laid down by their former statesmen. The reason has been that American interests were not directly affected by political events which might occur on this side of the Atlantic. But what has been the case on the American continent, which stands somewhat in the same relation to them that Europe does to us? There they have carried the doctrines of interference and intervention to an extreme length, and have enforced them too often in an overbearing and arbitrary manner, rarely, if ever, exceeded by the most despotic and ambitious states of Europe. The "Monroe doctrine" is but the doctrine of the balance of power carried to its extreme limit. The right which the United States occasionally arrogate to themselves to control and interfere in the institutions and internal affairs of the republics of South and Central America, goes beyond anything which any European state would now probably venture to claim.

The United States have a foreign policy well defined and founded upon certain principles, and one which every American statesman would consider essential to the interests and dignity of his country. It is directed to the carrying out of those vast and ambitious schemes of aggrandisement and of universal influence which are amongst the signs of the youthful vigour, the growing power, and the marvellous vitality of the great republic.

Whilst insisting upon the necessity of a definite foreign policy, we do not advocate any unnecessary interference or intervention in the affairs of other countries. In the present unsettled state of Europe, whilst changes of vast importance are taking place in the political system, the attitude of England should be one of watchfulness, observation, and expectancy. There is nothing, as far as we can at present see, likely to take place in Europe dangerous to the liberties and independence of our country. The union and consolidation of the great German race, and the establishment of a powerful state in the centre of Europe, need cause us no alarm. On the contrary, it should be a source of satisfaction to us as affording an additional security for the maintenance of peace. Danger could only arise to us in the event—on every account a very improbable one—of this state becoming a despotic military power. Then, indeed, supposing France to retain her present form of government, there might be danger to the free and constitutional states of Europe—England

included. But we have no fear of any such result. We cannot believe that the German race, so enlightened and so progressive, would renounce their liberties even to accomplish their national unity. On the contrary, we are convinced that freedom will gain by German unity, which would act as a check upon France if she entertained designs upon the small free states of Europe.

But we must be prepared to find that England no longer holds that high and exceptional place in the world which she has hitherto been accustomed to fill. Her aid and influence will no longer be sought as they were when the balance of power was founded upon the artificial basis devised by the framers of the treaties of Vienna, and when she alone was looked upon as the representative and supporter of free government and popular rights. Our own profession of the non-intervention doctrine, and the selfish avowal that for the future we shall not interfere in any matter, unless our own immediate commercial interests are concerned, must, of course, diminish our influence on the continent. In future political combinations England may be overlooked, and we must resign ourselves to the perusal of state documents, issued by foreign nations for the regulation of European affairs, in which the name of England does not even appear.

There is, however, one class of national interests which may still compel England to take part in European affairs,—that connected with our Eastern empire. It may have the effect of again bringing us into collision with Russia, and of thus influencing our foreign policy. The question is one of so much importance, that it should be treated in a separate article. We have therefore intentionally abstained from touching upon the position of Russia in the sketch we have given of the political condition of Europe.

In conclusion, we may observe that the year which has gone by has seen a great advance on the continent of Europe of that irresistible stream of democracy which, as De Tocqueville first pointed out, must sooner or later overwhelm the whole fabric of European society, and of her political institutions. The advance of that stream has, however, been less rapid and less palpable on the continent than in this country, where a Reform Bill, passed by the aid of the landed aristocracy, has for the first time broken down the barriers which had hitherto opposed it, and where the world has witnessed the strange, though not unprecedented, sight of a powerful class preparing the instrument by which the destruction of their own exclusive privileges and influence is to be in the end most surely compassed.

AN ESSAY ON CARLYLISM;

CONTAINING THE VERY MELANCHOLY STORY OF A SHODDY MAKER AND HIS MUTINOUS MAID-SERVANT.

We are specially anxious in the remarks which we are about to make, and which we have ventured to connect with the name of a great man still living amongst us, to be understood as being in no degree desirous of detracting from the honour and reputation which he has most deservedly won by his honest and most excellent work. We profess ourselves to be not only admirers of the genius, honesty, and courage of Mr. Carlyle, but also to be among the number of students who have sat at his feet believing, trusting, and learning; and we acknowledge heartily the debt of gratitude which is due to him by his countrymen at large. His history of the French revolution, brilliant as it is with the most picturesque word-painting that has perhaps come from the pen of any English writer, and wise with well-digested thought, is one of the most charming books in our language. His story of the Diamond Necklace, his Life of Cagliostro, the little tale of Blumine in Sartor Resartus, his paper on Boswell's Life of Johnson, are miracles in their different ways of artistic workmanship on the part of an author. His vindication of Cromwell is one of the most complete pieces of biography in our language. And perhaps no work of history was ever written containing more brilliant episodes and showing throughout a grander honesty of purpose than his Life of Frederic the Great. It can be the desire of no literary man in England, of no editor, of no set or school of men, to disparage so great a name. But we think that no other title for these observations would be so true and just a one as that we have chosen, and that none other would explain so clearly and concisely the nature of the subject which we have in hand.

Mr. Carlyle has for many years past,—we think in every work that has come from his pen for many years past, and in every word that he has spoken on the aspect of the world around him,—sounded a loud note of warning to his countrymen that has gradually become a wail of woe, till he has forced us to regard him as a prophet of evil days to come. And in this way he has founded a school of thinkers, who are as vehement in their forebodings of a coming day of wrath,—though they are not so precise, and therefore not so easily refuted,—as has been Dr. Cumming and his school with their assurance of a speedy end to all our troubles here on earth. We

have had Mr. Ruskin preaching to us in the same strain,—in the same strain, but with denunciations based on fears much less reasonable and on arguments much less true than those by which Mr. Carlyle is actuated. From such preachings and prophesyings that phase of thought and of belief which we have ventured to call Carlylism has sprung into existence and been widely promulgated, till men feel themselves called upon to ask themselves whether Carlylism can indeed be true. The doctrine amounts to this simply, that we are all going to the——Mischief! There has ever been held out by the great master some faintest hope that salvation may yet be possible,—that it may be possible at any rate to a fragment among us; that, near as we all are to the edge of the precipice, over which when one or all shall have slipped there can no longer be a vestige of hope for that one or that all, still,—still,—even yet, a man, if he will abandon all that he has done, and all that he is doing, and will devote every energy that he has to clutching on,—such a man may yet be saved. But it is manifest enough that the prophet himself has but little hope that such salvation will be extended to many of his countrymen of the present day, not to many indeed of those who are living in the present age. Where salvation may be achieved it must be won by a very absolute change. England,—let us say England, as England is the dearest to us,—has no chance at all bodily unless she can set herself bodily to work, to work as one whole, and make herself to be something very different from what she now is. And we see clearly enough that the prophet ventures to hope for no such change as that. In the last observations which he made to us as he was contemplating his Niagara, he has indeed told us that an "aristos" or two properly minded might do something, might make an effort; but this hope he holds out too plainly without strong trust in it himself. And indeed we none of us can have any trust in the prospect of what an "aristos" or two may do for us;—such an "aristos" or such "aristoi" as Mr. Carlyle describes to us. That great men as they spring up from day to day among us will be the guardians, and teachers, and in some sort the saviours of the lesser men is no doubt true now; and will be, and ever has been true. And it is true enough that our great men are like enough to come, have very frequently come, do come generation after generation, from that class among us whom Mr. Carlyle wishes to point out to us as the most probable source of salvation for us. From the highest rank of our nobility and of our commercial aristocracy we draw so large a proportion of those men who are the salt by which we are leavened as to make it probable enough that we ought to look for a considerable proportion of our "aristoi" from among them. But we none of us can believe,—he too manifestly does not himself believe, only faintly ventures to point out the possibility of a chance,—that any special salvation of this sort is now, now for us just on the edge of the precipice, to be had

other than that which from generation to generation and from year to year we draw from the good work done among us by our good men. We have no ground for expecting now, at this moment, any speciality of an "aristos" to assist us as we are sliding so rapidly over the edge of the precipice.

We all know what preachings of this kind mean, and to what they come; for we so often hear them from the pulpits of our church. Clergymen tell us from Sunday to Sunday that a total change is needed for us, and that nothing short of total change will be of any service to us. We are, we are assured, wallowing in the depths of sin, loving ourselves, and utterly disregardful of our God. We must, by sudden and great effort, absolutely change all that, and change it at once. We must learn to hate ourselves, and the world, and to care only for the things of the next world, or else——! Now we hear that, and such like denunciations on Sundays, morning after morning, regarding them as the special product of a special half-hour; and we go away utterly unmindful of them. The clergyman himself, having simply performed a very difficult task as best he knew how, does not expect his counsels to be obeyed. When he tells his hearers that they are to surrender every thought to the things of the next world, he mildly hopes that he may induce some one to give up an additional five minutes to his prayers. His denunciations have been uttered in the superlative degree, because the superlative is of all degrees the easiest used in utterance. He does not believe them himself, though probably he thinks that he does. But with Mr. Carlyle's denunciations there is this difference,—that he is thoroughly in earnest, and does believe them himself. When he tells us that we are going over a Niagara fall, he hears the rush of waters in his ears. When he prophesies to us woe, woe, woe,—unless all be changed, unless we submit ourselves humbly to some "aristoi," unless we turn altogether round in the path on which we are walking, and walk backwards,—which he must know we shall not do, he sees the destruction, the utter annihilation, coming on us from a distance, and hardly from a distance. It is the truth of the prophet which makes him as a prophet considerable, and which is now inducing many anxious, thoughtful men to ask whether the thing be as true as the man,—whether Carlylism be as worthy of belief as is Mr. Carlyle.

The question is simply that;—are we, or are we not, going to the Mischief? And then there is that other very important question;—what does We mean? There are three impersonations of which the thinker thinks when he comes to inquire about that We. There is himself. Is he going to the Mischief? There is his country. Is that going to the Mischief? There is the world of men at large, God's whole universe. Is that going to the Mischief?

We venture to express an opinion that the thinker thinking of all this should fix his mind on the first and last of these three impersona-

tions,—not troubling himself much about his country in the matter. That a man should trouble himself very much about his country is no doubt an imperative duty,—a duty from which no man ought to conceive himself to be free. But it need not, we think, enter much into his consideration on this important subject of going to the Mischief under the ban of Carlylism. Mr. Carlyle himself would be the first to assert that a man's duty to his country consists in his honest and true performance of the work to which he has been called by the circumstances of his life. He would hardly acknowledge that the ordinary man owed any other public duty to his country,—such as voting for this or that candidate at the hustings, or keeping any eye of watchfulness over the possible shortcomings of his pastors and masters. In that matter of a man's country, if it be going to the Mischief, he can probably hardly stop the progress at all otherwise than in a small degree by honest work at home,—which will at least, in a very large degree, stop any such progress for himself. And, moreover, it is after all comparatively but of small moment to the ordinary man whether his country be going to the Mischief or not. This we say hesitatingly, fearing that we shall be charged with lack of patriotism, but knowing well that we are in no degree guilty on that charge. Have not all countries gone to the Mischief,—fallen into the sear and yellow leaf,—as years have rolled over them? Does not history make it manifest to us that at any rate as yet dominions have not been formed on earth which shall endure? And we think, therefore, that it should be more to an Englishman's heart to inquire what shall have come out of England when England shall no longer be great among the powers of the earth, than to be anxious that her power should endure through coming ages. As the father in his latter years lives again in his boy, and lives a sweeter and a purer life than that which he has compassed for himself, so should Englishmen look for the perpetuity and for the perfection of what is good among them in distant realms, in lands not to be dominated by the English flag, but which will be great by the strength of English virtues. If there be no such perfection coming, no such perpetuity of good, if indeed there be no English virtues from whence these great results can come, then we may say, —looking at the lands in which the English tongue is spoken,—that the question to be considered is not whether England is going to the Mischief, but whether the world of men at large is not hastening on that way. For these reasons we think that they who are frightened by the utterances of the prophet need not take trouble upon themselves on behalf of their country in reference to those utterances. The frightened man can aid his country in this matter only by aiding himself. And after all, if it be so, that luxury and wealth, and the overstraining of competition,—what we may perhaps call the symptoms of unavoidable old age in a nation,—are present with us, signifying that this country is becoming old and is tending towards decay, what then?

We hardly need a prophet to tell us that at least up to this period in the world's progress, such is the fate of all nations.

But that first question, whether the man himself be going to the Mischief, must be very important to every man. Indeed, it is the only one of the three questions which can be of importance to any man as leading to improved action, or even to the resolution for such improvement. Whether the world at large be growing better and better every day, or worse and worse, is matter for speculation and inquiry, and for most melancholy consideration; for thoughts quite funereal and agonising to him who, having made the inquiry, finds himself bound to tell himself that the progress is in the wrong direction. But as for any action in bar of such downward travelling, the ordinary man can only use it on his own behoof, and on that of those belonging to him. We think that the natural line of thought for the student of Carlylism leads him to ask the question, What shall he himself do, when he has brought himself to put confidence in the Master, and has made himself willing to submit himself to that Master's teachings? For, till a man brings himself to this, all teachings must be to him vague and unprofitable. We are all inclined to think, when we are listening to sermons, that though they are inoperative on ourselves, and for certain reasons must continue to be so, they will probably do some good for others. That comes from lack of faith in the preacher. If any good is to come from any preachings, it must spring from that amount of faith which shall produce personal obedience. The question now is, What shall the man do, the man, I, who has been brought by Mr. Carlyle to believe that he is going to the Mischief,—what shall he do to save himself from that journey? It is the old question of the trusting man who has been brought by the preacher to have a sense of his own danger—"Master, what shall I do to be saved?"

The man thus anxious to be saved goes of course to the Master who has convinced him of his danger, and looks to him for instruction. He finds instruction very plain in its words, palpably good,—so good that there can be no doubt about its goodness. But he has heard it before. He has heard it before in the line of an old song—"It is good to be honest and true." The practical teaching is, we think, confined to that which is taught also in this line; and the remainder of the utterances are simply descriptive of the evils springing from the want of truth and honesty, and of the results of those evils. The teaching is, no doubt, good. There can be no better teaching. But how is the poor sinner to apply it? He finds, as he continues to study his Master, that he cannot fit himself to the teaching, because every act, and thought, and word of men around him are described by the Master as being void of truth and honesty. Truth and honesty, in the abstract, are, of course, good. But when the pupil comes to the details of life, he finds that those springs of action which he has hitherto regarded as salutary are all included by the Master among the

wickednesses which tend to destruction. The accusation made against all the world around him is, that the world around him is false and disobedient, and consequently dishonest. He is himself probably aware of certain short-comings,—short-comings in spite of good resolves, short comings of which he repents from day to day,—still falling back into them again, perhaps with some improvement, perhaps, alas, with none. He sees that it is the same with the world around him, and he hears that it has been so since the world began. But he has still hoped in spite of his own unworthiness, because God is good, and because, knowing himself to be unworthy in much, he also knows that in something he has been worthy. But this Master tells him that there is no worth of any kind anywhere around him, or near him; that all worth is so far distant that he never can have seen any worth; that those very things are unworthy which he has been taught to think most worthy. It is good to be honest and true. Yes, indeed. There is no doubt of that. But what is truth and goodness?

It is clear, at any rate, that everything is bad, and the badness of everything is exemplified by, let us say, three specified vices of the day. The power of political governors is controlled by the will of those who are governed. The manufacturers make shoddy. And the maid-servants give warning. His Master thinks on that great question of the power of the governors, that governors should be despotic. He, the inquiring sinner, has hitherto been taught by that long course of teaching which is in activity on a man's behalf long before his birth, that some control by the governed over the governors is the one great political good to be desired; and looking back, he sees, after a dim fashion, that the world could not have progressed without it. And he finds that the very men who have been heroes to his own Master have ever been concerned in obtaining this control for themselves and others. Mahomet, Luther, Cromwell, Washington, Mirabeau, even Frederic himself, were especially men who would not obey,—unless they saw the reason why. He finds that doctrine of obedience to governors to be so vague that it means almost nothing, and discovers at last that obedience is due, not to governors, but to laws. He can see around him, indeed, much disobedience to the laws; but he sees that such disobedience is punishable, and is punished; and that it is indeed, though too frequent, the exception and not the rule. When he tries to use these lessons about obedience for his own behoof, they become so misty before him that he can do nothing with them. He understands well that he must obey the laws, or that failing to do so he will be made to undergo penalties; but he cannot understand how he is to sit with that obedience of a contrite spirit which the Master requires, at the feet of a Bow Street magistrate. That he is to sit in that spirit at certain other feet he knows well; but that is not the obedience of which the Master is speaking.

And then about the shoddy! We will say that he himself is a maker

of shoddy,—that it is his business to supply certain customers with a somewhat ephemeral article made of old woollen rags, and so concocted as to have some resemblance to good cloth. He is aware that in his way of business his profits from his capital are such as the world is content to allow as just,—ten per cent., shall we say, on his capital, or perhaps fifteen. He is aware at any rate that the profit is no greater to him making shoddy than it would have been had chance made him a maker of broadcloth. But the world wants shoddy, and some one must make it. He, nevertheless, according to his Master's teaching, is clearly in a perilous case. He had known before, well, that he who sells shoddy for good cloth, telling a lie about his shoddy,—that he is a thief. Since his childhood that had been well enough known to him, as it is known to, and acknowledged by all the world. But, according to this teacher, to make shoddy at all, even though the world wants shoddy, and is content to pay for it a price as such, is manifestly a sin. The sin lies not in the passing off of the shoddy for something better than shoddy. It is the same with bricks;—the same with carpentry. Though for certain purposes,—whether the purposes in themselves be wise or foolish does not bear upon the question,—though for certain purposes the world wants cheap bricks and cheap carpentry, to make cheap bricks and cheap carpentry is a sin for which the guilty one must surely go to the Mischief. And then, alas! so general is the demand for those articles in the present day that all manufacturers and all retail dealers must go to the Mischief because of them.

And, thirdly, about the unfortunate maid-servants, who will give warning to their masters and mistresses! We will take the teacher here in his broadest sense,—in the sense which we believe he would himself acknowledge,—and we will suppose that our friend, who is anxious to benefit himself by his Master's teachings, thoroughly understands the spirit in which his Master is speaking. Service generally should have in it something of perpetuity,—not be what the Master calls nomadic; and the maid-servants of whom the Master speaks are especially brought forward as illustrations of the rule, because, when they sin against this rule, the punishment upon them, poor sinners, comes the quickest and the absurdity is the most manifest. A young woman of perhaps twenty years, who knows only how to trundle a mop, and that not as it ought to be trundled, taking upon herself to give warning because her mistress bids her trundle her mop with more vigour, walking forth into the streets with nothing but her Sunday finery in a bandbox and some poor thin remnant of wages that has been due to her,—going forth in that way when bread and mutton and a decent bed were hers if she could have brought herself to endure the somewhat earnest convictions of her mistress about the trundling of that mop,—is not that a sad sight? Would it not have been better for that young woman if there could have been some-

thing of perpetuity in her service? Not liking the idea of obligatory service for life,—for which, however, our Master does seem to have a certain hankering in his heart,—shall we say that apprenticeship or obligatory service for seven years would be advantageous? That we think is a fair view of the Master's teaching about mutinous maid-servants, and that is the view taken by his pupil, the shoddy-maker, who is really so anxious to have himself saved from the threatened destruction. He, too, has his mutinous maid-servant; and he thinks how it might be if she were bound to him for seven years. This at any rate he sees, that in such case he also must be bound to the young woman. And yet, if this trade of his in shoddy be so wicked that on consideration he shall find that his soul will not endure it, and that it must be abandoned, how shall he remain bound to anything except to that poor wife of his, who must be his in perpetuity for better or for worse? And, again, suppose the young woman to whom he is bound, being stiff of spirit and mutinous, will not trundle her mop at all, when she finds that she must be supplied with bread and a bed whether she trundle it or not? In such case there must surely be some penalty by which trundling shall be exacted! That penalty, which he has known all his life, of bidding his mutinous maid-servant to go forth in her idleness, and which has always hitherto sufficed to ensure some trundling, is to be taken away from him. What in lieu of this shall be his safeguard? Looking through his Master's teachings, he finds some vague allusion to the excellence of patriarchal life,—not indeed with any assured advice that he can take home to himself and use,—not exactly telling him to go and become at once a patriarch in his own household. And then, as to the old patriarchs,—he has an idea that they could now and again slaughter a mutinous non-trundler or two, thus having in their hands at any rate an intelligible mode of stopping mutiny; and certain latter-day patriarchs have, as he knows, stopped domestic mutiny by—flogging. His Master, though he does not object to this remedy on principle, does not hold out any hope to him that he can use it. The only remedy that may possibly be within his power with a mutinous young woman hired for seven years, would be to take her before a magistrate,—to have, indeed, the law of her,—which he sees would be costly and inconvenient. If a young woman will be mutinous, would it not be better for both that she should be mutinous at her own cost and not at his, as in that case she may at last be made to feel the evil of her own mutiny, and thus, perhaps, be cured. It becomes at last very manifest to him that he can do no good by any change in his way of dealing with his maid-servant. It may be that the world is all wrong,—that the world at large is going to the Mischief in this matter of maid-servants, as in so many other matters. He is most anxious to believe his Master. But, nevertheless, looking out with such eyesight as he possesses into the working of things around him, he sees, or thinks that he sees, that that patri-

archal life which admits of perpetuity of service could only suit a young uneducated people,—that every step taken by an advancing world of human beings must be in opposition to it,—that a greater one than the Master has surely ordained this.

What, then, shall he do,—he himself,—in order that he may not go downwards upon that journey which it is so necessary for him that he should avoid? "It is good to be honest and true." That at least stands by him, though he has broken down in that matter of the mutinous maid-servant and in so much else. He will do his own work with his own hands as well as he can possibly do it. But then he is a poor maker of shoddy, and must certainly abandon that. He will abandon it in obedience to the Master's teaching, and will take himself to the making of something else. He will make bricks,—bricks as well as they can be made, so that they shall last as the old bricks lasted, shall last for centuries upon centuries. But he cannot make such bricks, and live by the trade, except at a very long price. He makes his bricks, and not a builder among them all will buy them! No man wants such bricks. That it is the world that is wrong, and not he himself, in this matter, he is quite sure; for so his Master has taught him. The bricks could not have been better made had they been wanted for a new Solomon's temple. But there they are; and as no man will buy them, he must starve. It is the world that is wrong. The Master acknowledges that, too, very clearly. It is the world that is wrong, and he,—once shoddy-maker with a profit on which he could live, now brickmaker with no profit at all,—cannot put it right. He cannot help to put it right even ever so little by good work of his own. He must starve unshod, and will feel while starving that that should not be the result of any teaching. May we not suppose that in his agony he will remember that the momentous question which he has asked respecting himself of this Master, he may ask of another master whose lessons are less severe, and who will always hold out hope to him instead of threats;—will not tell him at every turn that he is lying,—a hypocrite, a blockhead, insane, delirious, one of a flimsy foolish set, requiring a dog-muzzle in hot weather, bewildered, changed from a man's likeness to beaverhood, hoghood, and apehood by some foul infernal Circe,—and the rest of it?

We think that no pupil, let him be willing to sit ever so docile at the feet of this Master, will be able to get from the Master other direct teaching for his own use than that contained in the old song, "It is good to be honest and true." And the pupil, thus failing to find written down for himself any directions which he can personally use, will be carried away to those outer, very important speculations of which we have spoken. He himself, whether he be going to the Mischief or not, must live after the fashion of those around him. He endeavours so to live with some efforts at honesty and truth,—as to which however he feels very plainly that he receives no encourage-

ment from his Master, who is continually telling him that he is one of a flimsy set, requiring a dog-muzzle, bewildered, and going into hog-hood;—but he finds that those speculations as to the destiny of the outer world are easier of access than any direction for the guidance of himself individually. And then, having with much indefinite dim thought taught himself to believe that his own England, dearly as he loves it, may perhaps ultimately go to limbo without much detriment to the world at large,—nay, must probably go there in obedience to existing laws of growth and decay, he allows his mind to fix itself on the prospect of the destiny of the world at large. Is that going to the Mischief? And how may he judge whether it be going to the Mischief or not? That there is an immense quantity of hideous sin and foul insincerity as yet in the world he did not want this Master to tell him. That perhaps was the first fact of which he ever was informed;—the first fact which he ever knew to be true. But he has hitherto always understood that a good time was coming, and that the promise of this good time coming was ever being made sure by improvement in things around him;—that the millennium, as he has heard it called, or time in which it shall be felt by all men that it is good to be honest and true because the devil shall then have been chained up ever so long, though still a long way off, is yet becoming perceptibly nearer; and that the light of it,—as the light of a distant lamp to a traveller in the dark,—is already beginning to make itself conspicuous and indeed useful. The speculator then comes to this, not whether mankind be bad or good, but whether they are daily becoming better or worse. If better,—then let the world be ever so bad, the Master must be wrong and the world is not going to the Mischief. The Master, if he means anything, means this,—that so much of the world as he sees with his very wide-seeing eye is going ever for these two centuries past from bad to worse, and from worse to the very Mischief. Is that so?

Our speculative shoddy-maker, driven to these sad thoughts about himself and others, is aware that the master in his forebodings is for the most part speaking of Englishmen;—not by any means speaking of them only, for neither does he tell us that a millennium is coming to other lands, which he most assuredly would have done had his far-seeing eye seen so much; nor does he fail to speak very loudly of the iniquities of people kindred to ourselves, the Americans of the States, and of other peoples still connected with our State power. There is a plain inference that the world at large is going to the Mischief, and that the note of woe is not sounded only to an Englishman, warning him specially that the evil day is coming upon him, whereas a good day is coming on others. But our shoddy-maker,—having indeed come to a somewhat uncomfortable understanding with himself as to the probable necessity for decay at some distant future day of English power, and feeling quite sure that the Master does not

mean that,—looks around among his own countrymen, as being most under his own eye, and endeavours to see for himself whether they be worse than they used to be. He feels that a share of the millennium light, if it be coming at all, and already making itself usefully visible, should certainly come to them among others. In a nation of people so conspicuous among the nations, there should be some promise of improvement, even though there may be no likelihood of perpetuity of existence,—which state of perpetuity we may regard as being compatible only with perfection of conduct. That perfection of conduct is not as yet near at hand, there is evidence enough. Our friend can find nothing in past history or in promises that have been credible to him to justify him in looking for immediate perfection. But are his countrymen going backwards? That is the one terrible question.

As to that question, our friend finds it very difficult to give an answer to it that shall be clear and conclusive. He knows that the Master has answered it, plainly saying that the backward road has been taken by all around him whom his far-seeing eye can reach. But it is so very necessary to have the clearest evidence before our friend will admit a fact, which if admitted will make all things wretched to him! Even for him, himself, he has begun to discover that if everything around him is going to the Mischief, he must go with the rest. He may strive to be honest and true; but his very honesty and truth, what are they but bewildered beaverhood, doghood, hoghood, apehood, and hypocrisies? He has laboured hard in making shoddy, striving to earn money so that his sons after him might perhaps be able to make good broadcloth; he has dismissed mutinous maid-servants, desirous that all under his roof should eat their bread in the sweat of their brows, trundling mops or otherwise. He has voted at the hustings for the gentleman who looks after the lowering of taxes, meaning to do his duty by his country. But all that is hoghood and doghood;—and if it be that the others are all going, he too, most unhappy one, must go with them. But are they going,—all this busy bulk of them that he sees around him?

That very many seem to be doing badly he cannot doubt. He too hears of this and that terribly bad commercial explosion, whence comes evidence altogether irrefutable that very many among those in the upper commercial world,—as he has been accustomed to regard the commercial world,—are by no means as good as they ought to be. He hears much of very dishonest men, and he hears of them in large numbers. But are the commercial men more dishonest than they used to be? He is told by his Master to go back two hundred years for the honest period,—at any rate to go back as far as that. Of the actual commercial honesty of man to man at that time, or at earlier periods, he finds it difficult to obtain any very reliable account. Commerce as it exists now does not seem to have existed then at all.

And he perceives at once that the private relations of man to man did not then obtain for themselves a public expression as they do now,—so that all men know of them. Of a great and good merchant or two he does know;—but great and good merchants he thinks he can name even at the present day. Buccaneering he finds to have been rather common, but it was in conformity with the feelings of the age;—that age from which we have so sadly degenerated! He finds records of sanctuaries for evil-doers, of permitted oppression by the rich, of professional robbers, of insecure life, of serfhood among a people fed on black bread,—sometimes only half fed upon black bread. He perceives too that the increase of educated intelligence in his own days,—for as to that he thinks that he cannot have any doubt; there are the newspapers and the people reading them; and although intelligence educated to that pitch is not liked by the Master, there it is, a fact,—enables him, though he be but a poor ci-devant shoddy-maker, with excellent bricks all unsaleable at any profit now on hand, to know all about the sins of the commercial world around him; whereas those from whom he has to learn about past ages knew so very little on the subject,—apparently cared to know so very little! Weighing, as best he may, the buccaneering, and the violence, and the tendency to crime of the one age against the commercial craft and hoghood of the other, throwing also into the scale a handful or so of craft and hoghood as probably belonging to, though not clearly recognised in, the transactions of the former times, he cannot say, of himself, in which period the good old rule as to honesty and truth prevailed with the widest efficacy.

But in other dealings between man and man he can see something. He can see a priestcraft which existed and oppressed men in the old days, but which exists and oppresses no longer, thanks to those very heroes whom his Master has taught him to worship. Surely, according to his Master's teaching, if the existing bad period begun with the restoration of one Charles, a former bad period ended with the deposition and decapitation of the other, so that the only good period was the period of the rule of Cromwell! And how inexplicable becomes this teaching from the lips of a Master who is ever saying that the authority of rulers should be endured, even though it be overstrained! But it may be that the evil was in the Stuarts,—that the old virtues from which we have departed so far are to be looked for in times beyond the Stuarts. Are there not the glories of Queen Elizabeth? Our friend has rather hopelessly given over that search into the affairs of comparatively private life, thinking that the fairest and most useful comparison cannot be made there. But of the affairs of public life the historian will tell himself something plainly. He reads and finds that, in the management of public affairs in those days, lies and knavery and self-seeking prevailed with her Majesty and her Ministers, and with all those around her, to such an extent as to

make it impossible that her Majesty or her Ministers, or those around her, should be absolved in any degree except on the plea that in those days lying and knavery and self-seeking were not looked upon amiss. Public men in his own days are, he knows, attacked; but watching as narrowly as he may the conduct of this man or of that, of a Russell, a Derby, or a Gladstone, he is compelled, in spite of his master, to confess loudly to himself that these men are as patriotic as was Cecil, and that they are infinitely more honest and true. When he puts the matter to the test he cannot bring himself to think that the Master is right in declaring that men in England are worse now than they were in those days.

But, after all, what does it matter to our poor friend whether these times or those are to be called the worse if these very days in which he lives must be recognised by him to be so bad,—that he, with all those around him, are certainly on the bad road? The Master says that such is the fact, and supports his statement by pointing out the iniquity, not only of that trade of shoddy-making, which in his first consternation our poor friend has found himself constrained to abandon, but, with an equally loud note of warning, pointing also to his own trade. The new Aristos is specially cautioned not to concern himself with "Fine Literature," or Coarse ditto. "In general leave 'Literature,' the thing called Literature at present, to run through its rapid fermentation, like a poor bottle of soda-water with its cork sprung." "We of 'Literature' by trade," says the Master, "we shall sink again, I perceive, to the rank of street fiddling; no higher rank; though with endless increase of sixpences flung into the hat." Why is Literature thus described as being on a par with, almost worse than, that unfortunate shoddy-making? It is not clearly shown to our friend why Literature is so bad; but a hint or two is given in respect mainly of one part of that craft, from whence our friend may make a guess as to the vice of the whole. "Fiction,—my friend," says the master, "you will be surprised to discover at last what a surprising cousinship it has to lying." It is good to be honest and true; and Literature, which otherwise surely would be a grand craft, is, of all, the meanest because of its falseness and dishonesty. Look at Fiction, which in these sad days has a preponderance of readers. Thereupon our friend does look at Fiction, and perceives,—or would perceive were he not so trustful in his Master,—that though there be lying in it, as it is now written in this country, there is so much of it, nay, the bulk of it, which certainly has no lying! Weak it may be, vapid, meaningless, ill done, but not false in its utterances, as far as he can judge. In his effort to get as far as this he has had to ask himself what is Lying. Is it not an attempt to deceive? The writer may attempt to deceive either by stating that which he knows to be false, or by wilful pretence at knowing that of which he is ignorant. There is much scope for

lying within reach even of the writer of Fiction,—though not manifestly so much as comes in the way of the unconscientious, historian let us say, or literary man of science. Lies there are, doubtless. But our anxiously inquiring friend finds that with much lack of strength there is a preponderance of truth. These fictionists do not make out virtue to be bad and vice to be good. They do not palliate ill-manners. They strive to show that the thief, the adulterer, the bad liver will suffer punishment; and that the honest, the pure, and the self-denying among us are those who shall be loved and venerated. In what consists this alarming cousinship to Lying of which the master speaks, almost as though he had been carried away in his enthusiasm by some unconscious reference in his own mind to the word itself, and its origin,—thus ignoring the very meaning which it has come to bear?

Thus inquiring, without much comfort to himself, our unfortunate individual, once a shoddy-maker, but now adrift upon the world without a trade,—as no one wanted his bricks made to last for centuries, the builders having found that their customers, who are quite as firmly determined as were their forefathers to be warm and comfortable in their houses, can be lodged more to their purpose in houses not intended to last for centuries; as many of us prefer a coat or a glove that shall be changed frequently and purchased at a low price to one intended to last, the coat for years, or the glove for months,—our poor individual is left thus in dismay, finding that he can realise from his great Master only this residuum of absolute instruction for his guidance, that it is good to be honest and true;—which, indeed, he knew before.

For ourselves, who are perhaps less earnest in looking for instruction than was the maker of shoddy, we must declare, that great as is our love and reverence for the man,—unlimited as is our esteem because he himself, personally, is so honest and true, and withal, so earnest in his desire to teach and improve us,—we will not allow ourselves to be frightened by this prospect of a Niagara Falls. For the world at large, we know that God is still over us, looking after it. For this England of ours, not anticipating for it any perpetuity of national greatness, we are content to see, as we think we do see, that it is accomplishing its appointed work in populating the earth with civilised and instructed human beings, knowing that as men have increased in numbers, so have vice, and greed, and lying increased,—but thinking, also, that as men have increased in numbers, so have high hearts, and pure spirits, and neighbourly love, with patriotism and philanthropy, increased among us. And for ourselves, much vacillating as is too often the case with us, having now most assured hopes, and now again fears almost abject, we declare that there is nothing to us in the preachings of this preacher to make our state more perilous to our imaginations than it was before we listened to his warnings.

THE TRADE OF JOURNALISM.

It is an odd reflection that now, as indeed at any other time throughout the year, there must be some hundreds of our young countrymen puzzling their brains over the choice of a profession. In the lives of most educated Englishmen there occurs, sometime between nineteen and two-and-twenty, a sort of moral breach of continuity. Owing to the peculiarities of our educational system the whole training of our youth has hardly any bearing, either direct or indirect, upon their ultimate career in life. From the time a child goes to a day-school to the hour when he leaves college, his whole existence is as it were cut out for him on one fixed groove. To get marks, to win prizes, to gain a scholarship, to pass examinations, to carry off honours, and finally to become, if possible, the fellow of a college; this is the life-path on which English boys are bade to enter, and to press forward in, as courageously as they can. But as to the hereafter, which is to follow college, they are left for the most part in the dark. How far this system is a good one we are not discussing now. All we desire to point out is the curious result that, to-day, as always, there are a number of young men at our universities and great educational establishments who have struggled, more or less successfully, in the scholastic arena, who see before them the end of their "learning years," approaching within a few weeks or months, and who yet have no more distinct idea of what their future occupation in life is to be, than if it depended exclusively on the hazard of a lottery. And the plight of young men so situated is not an enviable one. In many countries, as indeed was the case in England up to a comparatively recent period, a man's profession or pursuit or trade is virtually chosen for him. Every now and then the absence of choice tells very hardly upon the man whose life is misdirected,—upon the round human peg which is fitted into the square hole. But in the vast majority of instances, men adapt themselves somehow to their allotted destiny, and shake down, with more or less of friction, to the position which accident, not choice, assigns to them. Again, in other countries, notably in America and the colonies, men at the outset of life can select any pursuit which seems good in their own eyes. Whether they succeed at it or not depends mainly upon themselves, partly on chance. But, as far as mere choice is concerned, any man in those remote regions may elect to be clergyman or tradesman, artist or farmer, lawyer or licensed victualler, diplomatist or commercial traveller, sculptor or

horse dealer, merchant or shopkeeper, dealer in any article, or disciple of any profession, according as his reason or fancy may dictate.

In England young men belonging to the middle class have to a great extent the burden of selection without the liberty of choice. If you go to any ordinary English country inn you do not find a "menu" of dinner provided for you, but are told that you can have exactly what you like to order. On questioning further, however, you are usually informed that you must choose between chops or steaks. So it is with the choice of a profession in England. The young guest about to sit down at the banquet table of life is requested to order what he likes, but when he begins to inquire what dishes are open to him to select from, he is told that he must choose law, or physic, or divinity. There is, no doubt, much to be said for each one of these learned professions. If you can get your mind attoned to the proper tune, you may live as useful and happy a life administering law, or healing bodies, or attending to spiritual wants, as in most other capacities. But then there are an infinite number of minds which are not naturally adapted to any of these avocations. Yet beyond these recognised trades there is, or rather was, no power of living for the great majority of our young men who wish to live in the same social conditions as their fathers have done before them. Without capital it is useless,—especially for a young man of education,—to engage in trade. Unless you have a certain military or naval connection, no prudent lad of moderate prospects would ever dream of going into the army or navy. To become a painter or sculptor requires a peculiar talent and special education; and even if it were possible for a man to strike out a new employment for himself, the eccentricity would be pardoned only on condition of certain and immediate success. Of late years, however, many of the unwritten laws of the English Medes and Persians have been seriously infringed. It is lawful for a man not in the army to wear a moustache; there is forgiveness now for the man who smokes in the public streets; and it is possible to earn a livelihood out of the pale of the orthodox professions without losing caste. It is of one, and the most important of these, if we may so call them, uncovenanted pursuits, concerning which we wish to write.

In this article we do not intend to treat of journalism in its relation to the public. There is, doubtless, much to be said as to its scope, character, functions, virtues, and failings, considered as a public institution. But to these things we do not desire to allude, except in as far as they bear upon the merits or demerits of journalism as a trade. We assume, for the time being, that journalism, like law or physic, is of use to the community; and, assuming this, we want to show how far it is inferior or superior as a trade to other callings. Under the general term journalism we should include all writing, whether in magazines or reviews or newspapers, which is written for money, with the view, not so much of enhancing the individual writer's reputation, as

of increasing the sale of the periodical in which it appears. There is, we think, a very clear and definite distinction between this class of writing and literature proper. In a certain sense everybody writes for money; the labourer is worthy of his hire, and if there were no hire there would be comparatively few labourers in the vineyard of letters. Still, even if there were not a sixpence to be earned by literature, books would still be written; and it may be fairly said that no book of any mark ever yet was written, the author of which had no end or object in writing it except to gain so many tens, or hundreds, or thousands of pounds. But this can hardly be asserted with regard to the vast bulk of anonymous writing in serial publications. Every now and then a man may write an article in a paper or magazine because he desires to promote certain opinions, or to spread certain information. Even the most hackneyed of hack writers probably takes more interest in one subject on which he has to write than in another. But, notwithstanding these exceptions, we may not unfairly say that the staple of our periodical literature is supplied by men who write in order to earn money by writing.

Many an article, never intended to live beyond a few hours, and paid for at so much per line or column, may be written with a more earnest feeling, with a greater regard for the exigencies of art, than books which are expected to confer fame upon their author; but such instances are necessarily exceptional, and we may safely say, as a rule, that professional journalistic writing belongs to a lower class of literature than histories, or poems, or works of fiction. It is owing to this distinction, too habitually overlooked, that so much apprehension prevails as to the "status" of professional authors. A great deal of cant is talked amongst the lower branches of the literary fraternity about the dignity of letters, a cant especially annoying to members of the craft who really respect themselves and the calling to which they belong. If a man can write a good report, or pen a neat paragraph, or compile news intelligently, or even compose a good essay, he is entitled to the same credit as a lawyer, tradesman, or artificer who does his work well and gives good measure for good pay; but he is not a benefactor of his species; he has no claim upon the public gratitude other than for just payment of his labour; and he has no right to hold himself exempt from the duties and obligations of ordinary work-a-day humanity. On the other hand, though we hold that professional literature should be regarded as a trade, we hold also that as a trade it is an independent and honourable one. To achieve success in any branch of it does imply a certain amount of original ability not equally needed for success in most other callings. Of the journalist it may be said, though in a humbler way, as of the poet, "nascitur, non fit." With ordinary intelligence and application any man may become a fair lawyer or doctor or merchant, but to achieve anything like distinction as a writer you must have a certain artistic instinct or faculty, or

whatever you choose to call it, not to be acquired by any amount of study. In the trade, too, of anonymous journalism, unlike almost every other trade in the world, neither fortune, nor rank, nor connections can assist you materially. There is but one personage whose patronage can permanently avail you anything, and that is the great unknown public. The public may be wrong in its estimation, or you may win its favour by unworthy means; but still you owe that favour and that estimation to yourself alone. Thus, if a man enters upon the trade of journalism under the impression that the mere fact of being a writer in the press will exalt him above his fellow-workers in other trades, he will soon find himself woefully disappointed. But, on the other hand, he will commit a signal blunder if he conceives that the pursuit is one which entails any necessary loss of self-respect or dignity.

As a mere money-coining pursuit, there is a good deal to be said both for or against journalism. It is emphatically one of those trades, aspired after by old Tulliver in the "Mill on the Floss," which require no capital and are all profit. A ream of paper, a box of pens, a bottle of ink, a table, and a chair, are all the stock-in-trade required. You want no offices, no studio, no shop, to be a writer; you have no need, except in a very incidental way, to go to expense to keep up appearances; you require neither carriages nor horses, clerks nor servants, for the extension of your business. Indeed, access to a good library of reference, not in itself a very difficult or expensive object to accomplish, is about the only outlay absolutely essential to success as a professional writer. And, in spite of all that has been written about the difficulty of getting any sort of employment as an unknown aspirant to literary fame, we believe there is no trade in which it is so easy to get a start as that of journalism. To make a beginning is always difficult, but not more so, we hold, in literature than elsewhere. By the laws of trade, which no novice can defy with impunity, a briefless barrister cannot go and ask solicitors to give him cases to plead; a medical student who has won every honour and medal the faculty could bestow upon him, cannot solicit patients to employ his services; and young divines, burning with eloquence, cannot command the use of a pulpit, or enforce the attendance of a congregation. But a writer, without any breach of etiquette, may go and pester every publisher and editor in London to provide a market for his literary wares; and he must be singularly unfortunate if he cannot find any one disposed to give him a trial. Indeed, the facility with which any new recruit can get enlisted into the army of journalism is one of its defects as a permanent trade. Anybody may enter it when or how he chooses. We writers may conceive ourselves to possess an extraordinary aptitude for pleading a case, or curing bodies, or converting souls, but we can no more go and argue a case in court, or perform an operation, or preach a sermon, than we can

fly without wings. But any barrister or curate or surgeon, or, for that matter, any apothecary, attorney, or minister, may come and poach upon our premises to-morrow; and if he can but hit his game, his services as a literary sportsman are as valuable as ours. But this accessibility of journalism to all comers, though it depreciates what we may term the net value of the calling, offers great attractions to young men in search of a profession, who have neither connection nor opening. No doubt if a man chooses to commence his literary career by writing epic poems, or five act dramas, or philosophical treatises, he may be a long time, whatever his merits are, before he finds a means of making his voice heard; but if he produces such articles as are fitted for general consumption, he will have no difficulty in finding a purchaser. Anybody, for instance, who wants employment as a journalist, has really nothing to do except to write letters to a paying newspaper on any subject of passing interest; and if his letters are good enough to secure insertion, he will be certain, sooner or later, to have the chance given him of trying his hand as a professional writer.

When the neophyte has once secured a periodical which admits his contributions, it rests with him to push his advantage. It is not as in other trades, where, whatever may be the talent of the student, years of toil are required before he can command the same remuneration as his older brethren. As in the parable, the workman who comes in at the eleventh hour commands his penny equally with those who have borne the burden and heat of the day. No doubt the experienced and practised journalist, with a known name, will at first obtain a higher rate of remuneration than an unknown aspirant; but this is only because he is likely to turn out a better article, and what is more, has given proof that he can continue to turn out such articles whenever they are required. No very long probation, however, is needed for a man to show whether he has in him the real making of a periodical writer, and when he has shown that, his position is secured.

From these causes we hold that there is no pursuit at the present day in which it is so easy to get a start, or to earn a moderate income in a short time, as journalism. Barristers, medical men, clergymen, civil servants, merchants' clerks, architects, and naval or military officers, would as a rule consider themselves fortunate if they cleared a couple of hundred a year by their profession at the end of some years of hard work and practice. Now, a writer in newspapers and magazines can hardly fail, with decent application and fair fortune, to make that amount at least in his first year; and this very facility of earning an income at first starting is one of the chief dangers of journalism as a career. The money is earned with no excessive labour; it is paid promptly; and every young writer thinks the amount can be extended indefinitely without difficulty. If for a couple of hours' work you can earn a pound,—let us say, by writing an article,—it can be shown mathematically that with six hours' work a day you can obtain a weekly

income of some nine hundred a year. The calculation would be perfect if it were not for the fact that it is a great deal more than twice as difficult to write two good articles a day as it is to write one; and also that, even if you could produce any number of excellent articles per diem, without any deterioration in the quality of the article produced, you would find it extremely difficult to insure a market for your wares. We recollect a young writer talking to us once about his prospects, and saying he had no fear about wanting money, as he could always earn his two guineas a day by writing before breakfast such an article as he had just sent off to his employers. With the wisdom of older experience, we pointed out that, even if he could send forth such an essay every morning, the weekly journal for which he then wrote would certainly not place six columns a week at his disposal; and that, failing the paper in question, there was not a single periodical which had any demand for the sort of serial essay he had just excogitated. Of course our advice was not attended to; and equally of course, we may add, when our acquaintance was forced by circumstances to take to journalism as a profession, not as an amateur occupation, he found he could not earn his bread.

In journalism, unlike most other pursuits, it is not the "premier pas qui coute." About taking the first step there is no great cost or difficulty; it is the second and third steps which are so difficult to surmount. Most young men of good education and fair abilities can put together an article which, with a certain amount of editorial correction, will bear insertion; and we take it there are very few men of the class we describe who do not know enough about some one or more special subjects to write creditably upon them. But, then, the fact that most educated men can do this renders the talent of comparatively little value. What A does, however good it may be, B, C, D, and so on down to Z, can do equally well; and therefore it is not worth anybody's while to pay A more than the market value of his article. It is, we should say from our own experience, very difficult practically for purveyors of ordinary literary matter to earn much more in their second year than in their first; and their income, small as it is, is necessarily a precarious one. So long as a writer of second-rate calibre happens to satisfy the proprietors of the journal for which he writes, he may draw his three, four, or five pounds a week regularly without much trouble or difficulty. He does his work as well as any one else of the class, and if he were not employed somebody else would have to be engaged in his stead for much the same salary. But if the periodical falls off, as periodicals will fall off, or if from any change in his relations with the owners he loses the engagement, he is almost as much at sea as when he first commenced his literary career. The mere fact that a man can write a good article now and then does not constitute him a good journalist. We are not disposed to exaggerate the peculiar talents required for success in journalism; but we

venture to assert that the talent is by no means a common one. Extensive, if not very profound, reading, a knowledge of the world, as well as acquaintance with books, considerable power of diction and a certain flow of fancy, intellectual tastes and physical energy, are all required, in more or less degree, for the composition of the successful journalist. The newspaper reader may say with truth that no extraordinary talent was required to produce any one of the articles furnished for his perusal; but if he considers that the writers of each of these essays furnish at stated periods, more or less frequent, any number of such articles, written, in most cases on very scant notice, on subjects concerning which the writer possessed no special knowledge, he may perhaps perceive that it is not quite so easy to be a journalist as he might at first fancy. Of course, these remarks apply more especially to the contributors to daily newspapers; but they are true also, though in a less marked degree, of the contributors to weekly and monthly periodicals. No man, we think we may venture to say, ever gained any permanent position or reputation as a professional journalist, who did not combine with the gift of style certain qualities which do not generally accompany the mere talent of writing.

In journalism it is not easy, as we have said, to rise out of the ruck of writers. Happily for those who succeed, the number who fail is extremely large, or else the remuneration given to success would be very small. We suppose few persons not acquainted with the trade are aware how very limited is the number of periodical publications which can afford to pay largely for contributions. There is in London, at the present moment, an enormous list of newspapers, reviews, magazines, &c., all of which must be supplied with fair average articles, and therefore the demand for such articles is very great, as is also the supply of their purveyors. But the world would be astonished if it learnt how scanty a proportion of these literary properties yield permanent incomes to their proprietors. The truth is, newspaper speculation is a lottery. If you do draw a prize you win a stake out of all proportion to your investment, but for one prize there are also a hundred blanks. It is said that though every now and then individuals make colossal fortunes in British mines, the annual outlay in our English mines always exceeds the return by an immense amount. A similar assertion might, we believe, be made with reference to journalistic speculations. Whether a periodical pays its way or not, is a point which the proprietors alone can say with certainty. But it is notorious that the number of London periodicals, not representing any particular trade or class, which are really valuable properties, might be counted on the fingers of two hands; and so the consequence is, that though there are many publications which do pay fair average prices for a good article, there are very few which can pay exceptional prices for the sake of securing the services of a good article-writer. Still, the number of prizes in journalism

is not badly proportioned to the number of eligible candidates; and, with ordinary luck and energy, a successful journalist at the present day may reckon on making from eight to twelve hundred a year by his pen. More than the latter sum he can hardly make under the most favourable circumstances by writing alone; and the probability is, that his earnings will be much nearer the former than the latter amount.

No doubt there are instances, though not of very frequent occurrence, in which journalists make considerably more than even the last-named sum; but then it will be found that they unite the trade of authorship to that of journalism, or else that, besides writing articles or essays, they add to their income by editorial labours.

In any other open profession that we know of, a man, however successful, would not have an equal chance of earning, say his thousand a year, before he was thirty. But, on the other hand, if he earned much less than that by the age of thirty, he might safely reckon that by forty he would be earning an infinitely larger income. A successful barrister, or doctor, or merchant, whose relative position in his pursuit was equal to that of a first-class journalist, would earn money infinitely more rapidly than the most popular of periodical writers could ever dream of doing. We are assuming, of course, that our journalist does not write books at all; or that, if he writes them, they do not sell, so that he derives no permanent income from the sale of his productions; that, in fact, when he has received the wage due to him for his article, he has nothing more to expect for his work, be it good or bad. The general merits or demerits of authorship, as a trade, are not the subject of our present discussion. We wish only to consider those of that branch of authorship which,—for want of a better word,—we have styled journalism.

It is a common notion that journalism is a very precarious means of livelihood. We have shown why it is so in the lower ranks of the trade, where the labour market is amply supplied, if not actually over-stocked. But in the higher circles of the pursuit we think there is no ground for the accusation. Every craft where the handicraftsman depends for employment upon his health of body and his mental or manual dexterity, is necessarily liable to vicissitudes. But we do not see that journalism is more uncertain than any other trade, in which the worker's mind is his sole capital. So long as his bodily and intellectual powers remain unimpaired, a successful writer can always command employment, and we know no solid reasons why either body or mind should be exhausted more rapidly in journalism than in any other calling. The trade is, as a rule, consistent with short hours of work and considerable intervals of complete cessation from labour. There was a sort of tradition amongst the older generation of newspaper writers, that to drink too much habitually, to be perpetually in fear of arrest, and to live hard generally, were essential characteristics of literary ability. Of course, those who lived up to

this code, and worked hard in their sober hours, could not keep the pace for long. But in itself we see no reason why a journalist should exhaust his powers more rapidly than a barrister or a doctor in large practice. The main defect of the trade, viewed simply as a trade, is that it leads directly to very little. Outsiders have generally an idea that success in journalism is a path to all kinds of distinction. Now we own that we look on this idea as a popular delusion. Journalism, as a means of making your way in the world, may be called, if we can be permitted the metaphor, a good mistress, but a bad wife. To have a connection with the press is a decided advantage to men in most professions, but the value of that connection is generally in inverse proportion to its closeness and permanency. The "ignotum pro magnifico" rule applies forcibly to this description of reputation. It is good to be known to write in the papers generally. It is not equally good to be known to write in any particular paper. Everybody who mixes in the middle classes of society, must be acquainted with men who enjoy a general reputation of being clever and influential, because they have written occasional articles in some popular periodical. On the strength of this solitary production, they are as much thought of as more regular writers, whose labours supply the staple of the periodical in question.

Nor is this estimate altogether an unjust one. As far as influence is concerned, the man who has got the "entrée" into the editorial precincts of any important journal is as well off as the man who is an habitué of the office. To the regular writer, the external advantages of a press connection are extremely slight. A man connected with the press can get free admissions occasionally to theatres and concerts; he may establish a speaking acquaintance with a number of public men, who think it well to be on friendly terms with the critics of their political conduct; every now and then he may learn a piece of town gossip or scandal a few hours before he would hear it discussed in the smoking-room of his club; and he is liable to be pestered by friends and acquaintances who wish to get their own hobbies puffed in the papers. But with this catalogue we believe we have pretty well exhausted the list of social advantages which can be honestly derived from journalistic writing. Of course newspaper proprietors and editors have much greater opportunities of pushing their advantages under the present system of anonymous writing; but then journalists are very seldom proprietors; and successful journalists are not often editors. The talents required for writing and editing are of a very different kind, and are not likely to be united in one and the same person. Judging from our own observation, we should say the number of appointments conferred on journalists for literary services was very small,—too small at any rate for a prudent journalist to reckon on the chance of his literary success leading to political emolument.

The truth is, that the anonymous character of journalism is extremely injurious to its character, viewed solely as a trade. We are perfectly aware of the very powerful arguments which can be urged in favour of the prevailing practice, and we are willing to admit for the present that the general character of the press may possibly be exalted by the fact of its impersonality. Whatever our own opinions may be upon this point, we have no wish here to dispute the accepted belief, that the public gains by the fact that writers in the press consent to merge their own individuality in that of the journal for which they write. We are treating now of the trade aspect of journalism; and from this point of view we have no doubt that the disadvantages of anonymousness immensely exceed its advantages. Most persons must recollect Thackeray's defence of the anonymous system. But able as that defence was, it has always seemed to us based on the supposition that journalism was to be the occupation of leisure hours, not a regular pursuit or trade. The barrister who wishes to tide over the briefless intervals of his life; the clergyman who wants to raise money to send his boy to college; the Pendennises who look on newspaper writing as a mere step to social or political success; the Warringtons who wish for nothing except to put guineas enough in their pockets to pay the rent of their Temple chambers,—all these, and such as these, naturally prefer the obscurity afforded by anonymous journalism. But men who take to journalism as a serious pursuit,—and the number of such men is necessarily on the increase with the growing prosperity of the press,—can hardly fail to see that the anonymous character of the trade tells heavily against its advantages in a pecuniary point of view.

Taking a rough estimate, we may, perhaps, say that on the metropolitan press there are engaged at the present moment some fifty gentlemen who have achieved eminence in their particular pursuit. How many of these men are even known by name to newspaper readers? It is no exaggeration to say that many journalists who have produced articles which have been talked about day after day, and week after week, for many a long year, are less known to the general public than the second-rate actors at a minor theatre. We do not dispute for one moment that even to the writer himself there are great compensating advantages in this obscurity; and that the articles produced under the seal of secrecy may be better than if, like other work, they were brought forth openly guaranteed by the writer's name. Our assertion is, that the successful unknown journalist occupies necessarily an inferior pecuniary position to what he would hold if his name were attached to his work.

From a pecuniary point of view, the anonymous system is expressly designed to promote the interests of the proprietor at the expense of the writer. We will suppose, and our supposition is by no means an

imaginary one, that a certain number of journalists have worked up a publication by their articles till it has became a commercial success. Whether with reason or without reason, they desire remuneration which the proprietor is not prepared to grant, and thereupon announce their intention of quitting the paper. To any such appeal, the answer of the proprietor is straightforward and simple enough. "Gentlemen," he would say, "I am very sorry to lose your services; your departure will put me to great trouble and inconvenience, and I should much prefer to make any reasonable arrangement which would suit your views. But if you press me, I will tell you frankly you are not essential to me. Of our readers not one in a thousand ever heard the name of any one of you; your writings have given my paper a large circulation, and if you all leave me to-morrow I shall not sell a single copy the less. Without disputing your merits, which I should be the last to do, you must admit, that my paper can now afford to pay high enough to secure the assistance of other writers who can write nearly as well as you, and, as you know, much less talent is required to keep up an established journal than to push a new one into a success. On reflection I think you will see you will lose a great deal more by leaving me than I shall by losing you, and so I wish you a very good morning."

This language, though not expressed "totidem verbis," is what any English proprietor would use under the circumstances we have imagined. It is obvious that he could not use it if the names of his contributors were as well known to the English public as those of the leading Parisian journalists are to the French public. No doubt the system of having signed articles would tell very hardly upon the remuneration of young writers. Our newspapers, as in France, would pay very high prices for the contributions of journalists of note, and next to nothing for the work of the unknown aspirant. There is a great deal to be said in every profession in favour of the trade union principle, by which the skilled workman is mulcted of the high wages he might earn in order to swell the wages of the average unskilled operative; but, on the other hand, journalism, as well as bricklaying, labours under certain disadvantages from the rules which forbid any workman to derive the full remuneration which, in other trades, would be the reward of his individual excellence or reputation.

It results from this state of things that no journalist can ever make an income, by journalism alone, at all corresponding to those made by men who obtain a similar amount of success in trades where every man fights on his own hand and under his own name. And for this reason, it is the ambition of every aspiring journalist to secure a reputation of some kind in other paths than those of mere anonymous newspaper writing. It is because the anonymous character cannot well be attached to special correspondence, that the special correspondent is so well paid in comparison with other newspaper writers.

As representatives of English journals in foreign lands, as authors of books, as writers of magazine articles of which the authorship is more or less known, our journalists endeavour, and generally contrive, to earn a reputation apart from that attaching to them in their professional status. How far journalism proper gains by this tendency of its disciples to seek fame elsewhere than in its service, is a question which lies beyond our purpose to discuss.

It will be observed that in these remarks we have not alluded to the moral aspect of journalism. The consideration by what rules an honest journalist should guide his writing, and under what limits he may sacrifice his individual views and opinions to those of the paper to which he contributes, though a very interesting one, in itself belongs to another branch of the subject of journalism. It is enough for us to say now that, in our opinion, a journalist may be an honest or dishonest writer, just as a barrister may plead honestly or dishonestly, or a politician may be scrupulous or unscrupulous. All we assert is, that there is no reason, as far as our observation goes, why a high-minded man should object to the pursuit of journalism, under the impression that by so doing he must sacrifice his self-respect or independence.

In many respects the profession is a very pleasant one to the successful writer. You have no clients, no constituents, no parishioners, no patients, whose whims and prejudices and fancies you must necessarily consult to some extent if you desire to succeed. Your one patron is the reading public, and to him you are under no kind of personal obligation, with him you have no sort of personal connection. Outside the room where you write you may live exactly the sort of life which seems best in your own sight, without the fear that your compliance or non-compliance with the views or practices of your neighbours will affect in any way your professional prospects. So long as your article is good you can always obtain a sale for it, no matter what judgment may be passed upon your personal manners or character, or mode of life. This immunity from the censorship of public opinion, as far as your professional career is concerned, may lead, and often does lead, to Bohemianism. But, on the other hand, it may be utilised so as to obtain for you an amount of independence hardly compatible with most other professions. Then too your occupation compels you, for the most part, to associate with men of culture and education; it forces you to be always adding to your store of knowledge, and to employ your thoughts to a great extent on subjects which must have some interest for thinking men. Moreover, to a certain class of minds the sense of wielding considerable power, without the penalties which attach to notoriety, possesses an especial charm. The "digito monstrarier" is as hateful to some men as it is pleasing to the bulk of mankind; and yet if such men desire to impress their views upon their fellows, they can hardly do so more

effectively than by writing articles hidden under the secrecy of the "we." All power is pleasant; and there are few ways in which the sense of power is brought more clearly home than on those not unfrequent occasions when the journalist finds that his written words have redressed some wrong, or put an end to some abuse.

On the other hand, there are no very brilliant prizes in the trade; and though it is easy to earn by it a moderate competence, it is very difficult to secure a large income in a pursuit in which, owing to its anonymous character, mere reputation tells for so very little. If we had to sum up we should say that, taking the good with the bad, it is a very fair profession for any one who has the real journalistic talent, a very bad one for men who, however able in other respects, can never produce anything better than fair second-rate articles. Energy, steady application, good conduct, and fair abilities, will enable anybody to rise gradually to distinction in most professions, even if he has no special natural aptitude for the pursuit. But this rule does not hold good in this particular trade. The qualities we have mentioned will help any writer towards success, but he must have something more than all this if he is to attain real eminence in the trade of journalism.

EQUALITY AT HOME.

"Antoine," said Mirabeau, returning gay
From the Assembly, "on and from this day
Nobility's abolish'd,—men are men,—
No title henceforth used but Citizen!
A new thrice-glorious era dawns for France!
And now, my bath." "Yes, Citizen." A glance
Of flame the huge man at his servant shot;
Then, wallowing sea-god-like, "Antoine! more hot,"
He growls. "Here, Citizen." A hand of wrath
Gript Antoine's head and soused it in the bath.
He spluttering dripping, trembling,—"Rascal! know,"
His master thunder'd as he let him go,
"With you I still remain Count Mirabeau!"

ABOUT ROWING.

THERE is a large part of the British public to whom the name of rowing recalls only the great annual contest at Putney, as horse-racing recalls nothing but the Derby. And it is not without reasons that the attractions of the former event are beginning almost to rival those of the great English festival. A very phlegmatic nature is needed to resist the attractions of such races as those of 1866 and of 1867. When Hammersmith Bridge is a black festoon of human beings, swarming like bees,—when a score of over-loaded steamboats are jostling each other for the lead,—when a crowd four miles long is covering the banks and choking the roads from Putney to Mortlake, and the two racing crews dash past, oar to oar, each with its eight human machines driven by fiercely-compressed excitement instead of steam,—at such a moment philosophers find it hard to refrain from shouting, and ladies from crying. Mr. Skey himself would, we fancy, forget the very existence of heart diseases, and the most unbending hater of muscular Christianity will, for a moment, set his teeth hard and clench his fists as though they grasped an oar.

> "That needs must be a glorious minute
> When a crowd has but one soul within it,"

as Sir Francis Doyle very truly observes, à propos to the St. Leger; and even the excitement of a Doncaster crowd of genuine Yorkshiremen may be matched on the Thames, where, happily, there is less money on the event, but where nobler animals than horses—for even rowing men have souls, according to theologians—are struggling for victory.

Yet if we had to give the intelligent foreigner of fiction a taste of the genuine rowing fervour, we should take him to a different scene, where true amateurs are not swamped in a crowd of noisy spectators. We would place him, for example, somewhere below Sandford, or halfway between Baitsbite and Clayhithe, some three weeks before Easter. A bitter March wind should be curling the surface of Nuneham Reach, or tormenting even the sullen Cam into a feeble imitation of rough water. Presently a little knot of men, on foot and on horseback, should approach us at a round trot, and the University crew come swinging with a long sweeping stroke round a corner. As the oars touch the water the boat bounds forward, and sends a long wave washing through the reeds. To inexperienced eyes the crew seems

to exhibit a faultless precision of style; but some sagacious mentor, who is watching every action with the eager solemnity of a general preparing for battle, occasionally breaks the silence by shouting a hypercritical observation at the top of his voice. "Two," it would seem, is not getting far enough forwards, or "Four" is rowing himself up to his oar, or "Seven" running away with the stroke. The accompanying crowd watches every motion, without daring to utter a sound above their breaths; and the whole phenomenon speaks of a vigorous purpose, as though eight-oared boats were by no means playthings, but part of our national defences. I may perhaps assume that my intelligent foreigner would not be anxious to follow this singular running procession, and that he would turn to me for some explanation to satisfy his curiosity. I will attempt to give the substance of the dialogue that would probably ensue.

What, my friend would ask,—especially if he were a German,—is the ground-idea of this phenomenon? Are these fine lads at work by way of discharging a religious duty? Or is it with a view to promoting their health? Or is it possible that some insular idiosyncrasy leads them to take pleasure in voluntarily undergoing the discipline of the galleys? In short, how do you account for the spectacle we have just witnessed?

To this I should reply after the manner of ancient philosophers by asking another question. What are the conditions the perfect fulfilment of which would entitle a sport to be the best of all actual or conceivable sports? And here would follow a Socratic dialogue, which I suppress for several reasons;—firstly, a Socratic dialogue is a bore to the reader, in the hands of any but a master; secondly, it is very difficult to bring it to the desired inference; and thirdly, the Saint Pauls Magazine, like Mr. Weller's vision, is limited. I will therefore take the liberty of jumping at once to the conclusion. We are finally agreed, I should say at the end of a brilliant display of logical fence, that that sport is the best which affords the amplest scope for the employment of the greatest number of the highest faculties; or, in other words, which is the best trial of the skill which makes the body a perfect instrument of the mind, of the muscular strength and general power of endurance, and therein of the high moral quality known vulgarly as "pluck," and, finally, of the various intellectual powers which are necessary to success in any game that deserves much expenditure of energy. Let us consider rowing under each of these heads, and if it has not the first place in all, I think it must be admitted that as a combination of the three it occupies the highest place amongst all known athletic sports. We will first take the question of skill.

There, the intelligent foreigner would remark, you must admit your case to be weak. Rowing appears to be the amusement of all others in which brute force has the highest value as compared with a trained

and cultivated application of inferior powers. Your great brawny University oarsmen are very fine-looking lads; they may remind one of the gigantic Gauls and Germans who used to astonish the feebler races of the south; but you must admit that they are a trifle clumsy, or, at least, that grace is not precisely their strong point. They may have the loins of a bullock and the arms of a blacksmith; but one would scarcely pick them out as promising pupils for a dancing-master; they come of the race which prefers boxing to fencing, and would bear down its antagonists by sheer weight rather than gracefully transfix them by superior skill.

There is, I should reply, a grain of truth in your remark, but it shows that your powers of observation require to be trained by a little more experience in the art. It is quite true that strength does more to secure success in rowing than in such games as cricket, tennis, or billiards. The weakest point about it is, in fact, that it does not involve much training of the eye. It has often been observed that nothing is more curious in its way than the extreme delicacy of perception and power of instinctive calculation that is brought out in some popular games. To perform a difficult stroke at billiards implies a combination of different powers which is little short of the marvellous. Two or three red and white surfaces upon a green ground form an image on the retina from which the eye, by an unconscious process, infers the position of certain balls on a table. Then by an instinctive calculation the mind determines the precise force and direction in which one of the balls is to be propelled, and the mode in which it is to rotate so as to produce a given result. Finally, the arm has, by a single blow with the cue, to execute the orders thus given, making a spontaneous allowance for the distorting effect of perspective. The delicacy with which the action of the various muscles called into play has to be combined is almost inconceivable, and the most refined mathematical analysis would fail to solve the problem, whose conditions a good player learns to satisfy instinctively. There is certainly little in rowing to correspond to this wonderful delicacy, which is illustrated on a different scale in such games as cricket and tennis. And yet, there is ample opportunity for a display of skill, which, it is true, is apt to be ignored by a casual observer. A looker-on judges of skill in two ways,—by noticing the results or the causes. In the majority of games he looks chiefly to results. A spectator of a game at cricket sees that a ball is caught or a stump displaced, and admires the skill of the players accordingly. Unless he has a very keen eye, trained by long experience, he cannot judge of a player by his action with any great certainty. We can see that a target is hit, but we cannot in the least tell by looking at the rifleman whether he is a good shot or a bad one; we can see that he avoids certain gross pieces of awkwardness, but no eyes are microscopic enough to tell whether he is bringing his muscles into that perfect harmony which is necessary

to secure the desired result; it is impossible for any observer to judge of the performer's keenness of vision except by arguing backwards from his hits. The telegraphic communication between eye and hand takes place through a set of wires which are entirely hidden from our sight. When, however, a man is successful in a competition of this kind, everybody may be an almost equally good judge of the performance. Now rowing exemplifies the opposite case. Here the result generally escapes our notice. A good observer can tell with considerable accuracy the pace at which an eight-oared boat is going through the water, though it is apt to be affected by many causes for which we cannot make the proper allowance, but it requires further experience to know which of the oarsmen is chiefly contributing to the result. You, my intelligent friend, see eight men swinging backwards and forwards, and are happily unconscious that one is a model of every perfection, and that another scarcely deserves his place in the crew. To you they resemble each other as the sheep in a flock resemble each other to every one but the shepherd, or dogs in a pack to every one but the huntsman, or niggers to every one but a slave-dealer or a missionary. The reason is that rowing has one thing in common with sculpture and other high arts. A statue of first-rate excellence may be copied so closely that it requires a practised eye to discover the difference, and a delicate mathematical instrument to measure it; and yet the copy may be immeasurably inferior to the original. The whole merit depends upon the last refined touches,—the delicate manipulation which eludes any of the rough tests which we can apply. And so between the first-rate oarsman and a respectable imitator there are imperceptible shades of difference which must be felt rather than seen. If one man's oar strikes the water an inch further forwards than another's, it makes a difference which may determine the fate of a race. If another allows the rest of the crew to anticipate him by an imperceptible fraction of a second, he may shirk half his labour. A gain of an inch in a stroke would win the University race by more lengths than decided the race of last year. Hence the distinction between a winning and a losing crew may depend upon this last refinement of polish in the individual oarsman and the skill with which the crews are combined. That "coach" whose stentorian remonstrances to "Four" and "Seven" excited your astonishment was engaged in this delicate work; he was the sculptor finishing his statue by touches imperceptible to vulgar eyes; the manufacturer who is conscious that the success of his instruments may be damaged by the smallest touch of rust,—by the most trifling imperfection in one of the joints of the machinery; the poet who knows that perfection of form is as necessary to the genuine vitality of his work as force and vigour of conception. Now you will perhaps understand what is the merit of rowing considered as an exhibition of skill. Inexperienced persons see little of the higher refinements of the art; but a connoisseur has a field for his

observations scarcely equalled in any other game. The great art of "coaching"—a term which I must assume my foreigner to understand—has acquired an exceptional development in rowing, or, in other words, the theory of the right mode of applying force has been more carefully elaborated there than elsewhere. In cricket, a man practises bowling till by frequent applications of the rule of thumb he has found out how to produce the desired effect, and the consequences of his skill soon make themselves felt. But in rowing we have to apply a more delicate, critical process, and to judge from a man's form—that is, from minute peculiarities in his attitudes—whether or not he is an effective workman. To all which, I must add, that the tendency of every modern improvement is to make rowing more of a fine art, and less of a mere rough contest of strength. In old days, two crews simply set to work with raw, uncultivated strength, shoving a heavy bulk by main force through the water. In the graceful skiffs of the present day it is essential that strength should be applied at the right moment and in perfect harmony; that the boat should be kept steady, that it should be neither jerked nor pressed downwards, but propelled by a steady force in precisely the right direction. It is the difference between cutting off a man's leg with a hatchet and amputating it with proper surgical instruments. And when all the necessary conditions have been fulfilled, the sight of a man applying his power so as to produce the greatest possible effect, is one in which the connoisseur may recognise a skill equal to that of arts far more refined in appearance.

Well, replies my inquisitive friend, I am not convinced by your ingenious argument (This sentence has the merit of paying an indirect compliment to myself, and of being obviously true, for no man is ever convinced on such points till he can judge for himself); but perhaps you can make a stronger case upon the other heads.

There, I reply, you are certainly right. No one can doubt that, whatever else rowing may be, it is an admirable trial of pluck. It is, with one exception, the only out-of-door sport practised by gentlemen for which any serious training is undertaken; and training may be defined as the art of developing pluck. There are, as all moralists know, certain virtues which depend directly upon our physical organs. No man can be thoroughly healthy in mind who has a bad digestion. It is said that Calvinism was eradicated from a certain district in America simply by drainage. A thorough system of drains improved the general tone of health, and put an end not only to agues, but to the gloomy spirit favourable to unpleasant doctrine about predestination. On the same principle, courage is intimately connected with a vigorous condition of body. It is physically possible to go through efforts after a few weeks' regular living which would have knocked you up at the beginning of the period; but training, if we look at it from a general point of view, should raise a man's courage, not only by

diminishing the painful obstacles arising from excessive fat and other evils that flesh is heir to, but by more directly raising the morale of the subject. A trainer has not done half his work who allows his crew ever to get out of spirits, to contemplate the possibility of disaster, or to dwell upon their own fanciful or real ailments. A man about to start in a severe race should not only be clear in complexion, and well-developed in muscle, but should have the hearty confident smile which, being translated, means "death or victory." There is, as I have said, only one other game which, in this respect, is comparable, or perhaps superior to rowing—namely, running. A man at the end of four miles on land is, on an average, far more fatigued than after four miles on water. His heart has by that time become totally irreconcilable with his other internal arrangements; it seems to be jumping into his mouth, knocking at his ribs, and swelling as though, like a young cuckoo, it considered all neighbouring organs as intruders to be crowded out. Running is perhaps pre-eminent as a means for giving a man a sensation suggestive of sudden death; but in other respects it falls far short of rowing. It develops less skill, for the directions which can be given as to style in running are comparatively few, and an awkward runner more frequently wins by sheer superiority of lungs or legs. And, as I may presently have to remark, it is very inferior trial of intellect, because people run on their own legs alone, and not on a system of sixteen legs, therein avoiding the difficulty of bringing the said legs into harmony. Putting running out of the question, rowing has an unquestionable advantage in this department over all its rivals. Cricket is a noble game, and a man plays all the better for being in good health. I believe indeed that the mid-day luncheon is frequently observed to be a critical period in a match. Liquor of different kinds has a singular faculty for getting into bats and balls, and rendering their course unaccountable to the performers. This fact shows that a certain amount of training would be highly desirable; but the occurrence of such aberrations proves also that the necessity for training has not yet forced itself very strongly upon the cricketing mind. A man who could exceed in beer the day before a University boat-race would certainly be capable of murdering his aunt; whereas, a cricketer guilty of a parallel excess would probably shrink, we may say, from any injury to the same relative of a deeper dye than assault and battery. In short, a severe training is the first condition of rowing races. The commandments obeyed by a University crew include severe prohibitions of eating or drinking beyond certain limits for five or six weeks previous to the race; and no similar code is provided for elevens or for the competitors in any other match. If any doubt remains upon your minds, I may quote the dictum of an eminent surgeon, Mr. Skey, that the University race involves the greatest cruelty to animals of any known game. I consider the term "cruelty" to be exaggerated; but substituting some such words as

trial of their muscular and constitutional strength, it is undoubtedly true; and what would you have more?

What, indeed! is the obvious reply of the intelligent foreigner; but I should like to know in what way a boat-race tests any intellectual faculties; for, to say the most, that term of "animals" which you have just employed, though not excluding the human race, seems to imply that in the opinion of a good judge, the competitors in that contest have the lower element of our nature most prominently developed. They are, I repeat, fine-looking lads, but there is something in their looks;—or perhaps in the way in which they are swaddled in divers wrappers,—which suggests affinities to a highly trained racehorse rather than to a transcendental philosopher.

In so saying, is my answer, you show a certain superficiality. To be captain of a University Eight requires qualities which would go some way to make a successful general, though not perhaps to enable their possessor to grapple with the theory of the Absolute and the Infinite. He ought to be a refined diplomatist, to have a rapid and decisive judgment, and the power of enforcing discipline. He should have the courage to hold firmly to his own opinion, and the rarer courage to make changes when it is necessary. A captain requires as much skill in composing a crew as a minister in forming his cabinet. It is not enough that the men separately should be good,—and the breakdown of any one at a critical moment may ruin the whole plan,—but each must fit into his proper place. There are infinite difficulties in soothing small vanities, and propitiating silly jealousies; as in the larger world, each man chosen is apt to make one grumbler at his selection and half a dozen grumblers at their exclusion; and the mere task of keeping eight men in good temper who are all in a feverish state of hard work and excitement, and who have to take all their meals and pass most of their vacant hours in each other's company, is itself enough to try an angel. Bow is an unpopular man, and ill-natured people maintain that he has been put in out of favouritism; Two takes the captain aside every other morning to reveal to him—not without gloomy satisfaction—a sure symptom of some new and fatal disease which he has just detected in a vital organ; Three is a picture of health and strength, but is so clumsy that no one knows whether he can be licked into tolerable shape in time; Four is a heavy good-tempered giant, who serves the invaluable purpose of being a butt to the rest of the crew at feeding times, but he is apt to lose his head, and then he is about as dangerous in a boat as a startled elephant in a caravan; Five would be unimpeachable, but for dark hints that he has a private score at some unknown public-house; Six labours under a chronic grievance, declaring with much loss of good temper to all his fellows that Four does not take his share of the work; Seven is really delicate, as Two professes to be, and will conceal his ailments till it is too late to find a substitute; and if the

captain does not himself row, Stroke probably considers himself to be the one man in the University who understands the art of rowing, and has to be coaxed and wheedled into a decent subordination; the coxswain has been chosen after long deliberation on the ground that it is worth securing an ounce more brains at the cost of a stone more flesh, and all the crew are profoundly convinced that if they lose it will be owing to that superfluous weight in the stern-sheets. Then there are perplexities about the boat, about the details of the work, about the cruel examiners who will torture some members of the crew, about the food supplied, and about a hundred other matters which are a constant tax upon the unlucky captain's fund of good humour. In short, a captain of a University crew is a man who has to put together a complex machine formed of human beings; he has to choose it properly in the first instance, to adjust all its parts to each other, to keep it in good temper and due subordination, to prevent its stomachs from getting out of order or its muscles from growing flabby, and generally to devote to this compound Frankenstein an amount of time and attention which would almost entitle him to preside over an episcopal synod. Many races have been lost from the weakness of the crew, from the badness of the ship, from ill-luck in the start, and from a hundred other causes; but the one great and irremediable defect is a want of brains. Of course, this is not peculiar to rowing; a cricket match requires the exercise of swift and decisive judgment still more than a boat-race; and there are many other games in which, for the time, the strain upon the nerve and powers of self-command is greater than in rowing. But that which is peculiar, or almost peculiar, to rowing is the necessity of enforcing discipline for weeks, and indeed for months, before the critical day; for a good captain will sometimes have made a race safe before his opponent has begun to choose his crew; his men will be like the Prussian troops, ready to be set in action at a moment's notice, whilst the opposition army may be as long in preparation as an Abyssinian expedition. It is the great demand upon this, as I may almost call it, statesman-like quality, which leads me to prefer rowing, on the whole, even to cricket, and certainly to any other amusement.

Assuming that you have established your point, my friend might reply, there is still one question which occurs to the philosophic mind. You have sung the praises of rowing on the ground that above all other amusements it makes great demands upon a man's moral and physical energies; granting this to be true, there is one thing which, if possible, seems to me to be a still more essential property in an amusement,—namely, that it should amuse. Now rowing, by your account, is, above all things, admirable for the system of training which it renders necessary, or, as it seems, for the trouble which it gives to the gentlemen in command, and for the amount of deprivation which they have to inflict upon their subordinates. Can you

then seriously lay your hand upon your heart and say that rowing is pleasant?

To that I must answer that philosophers require to look into matters rather more deeply than the outside world, in order to make out their case. If millstones were not in some degree transparent, we should be in danger of many unphilosophical conclusions. No doubt most that meets the eye in this, as in some other athletic pursuits, is the endurance of labour and discomfort. There is indeed a certain pleasure about any exertion of power, to the man who feels that he has a sufficient stock to draw upon; and neither rowing nor any other exercise should ever be pursued until the system becomes bankrupt, or till a man has to draw upon his constitutional capital as well as upon his daily supplies of strength. Still, there is a certain amount of pain connected with even a moderate degree of this exercise. There are blisters and excoriations upon various parts of your person. There is a horrid aching in the muscles to be overcome. There is the annoyance of turning out in all weathers, when the sun is blistering your bare arms, or the snow forming a soft chilly plaster upon your back. There is the severe strain when a strong headwind makes the labour of forcing your oar through the air almost equal to that of driving it through the water, or when a flooded stream seems to bring the boat to a standstill as soon as the pressure of the oars ceases to act upon the rowlocks, and, which is perhaps the most vexatious circumstance, you must sometimes endure the misery of feeling that other men in the crew are shirking their work, and cultivating an elegant at the expense of a forcible style. You will seldom feel more inclined to use strong language than when your neighbour rises from his seat as dry as a bone, without a hair turned, and complacently observes that he has found the boat go very easily to-day; and there are infinite vexations to be endured at the hands of the faint-hearted and indifferent. There is in every crew some one who makes it a favour to row; he generally keeps a mythical parent in the background, who disapproves of the amusement, and occasionally forbids him to continue it at the moment when he has become indispensable; and there is the over-zealous man who conceals a swelled hand till it has to be cut open, and its proprietor laid on the shelf for a fortnight. And then there are all the detestable annoyances with which fortune persecutes the brave,—the oar that breaks at the start, the boat that has a hole knocked in it at the last moment, and the brutal tutor, now, it must be admitted, a rarity, who cuts through all your arrangements by enforcing compliance with some tyrannical regulations as to lectures and examinations. All this, and much more, might be urged by an ingenious advocatus diaboli, but it is based upon a sophistry. There is nothing from Christian morality down to playing dominoes which may not be made to appear unpleasant by insisting upon the incidental annoyances that may result from the

practice. After all, the greatest pleasure in life is to have a fanatical enthusiasm about something: it may be the collection of pictures or of foreign postage stamps,—the preaching of teetotalism or of ritualism,—it matters comparatively little what is the special hobby upon which a man should mount; but the possession of at least one hobby, if not of a complete stud of hobbies, is the first condition towards a thorough enjoyment of life. It is commonly said that chess is too severe an intellectual trial to be suitable as an amusement; and the argument is a very sound one against learning chess for those who cannot devote their time to it; but the intense attention which is willingly granted by a good chess-player is the best proof of the powerful attractions of the occupation. Now this is the real glory of rowing; it is a temporary fanaticism of the most intense kind; whilst it lasts it is less a mere game than a religion; and unlike other games, it lasts throughout a year, and whilst it continues it may be made to occupy every hour of the day.

A rowing man passes his whole day, and day after day, if he chooses, in some occupation connected with his favourite sport. When he is not actually rowing, or running, or conscientiously devouring his allotted modicum of victuals, he may be picking up gossip, proving to the satisfaction of his own crew that they did the course the day before in 8′ 19″ instead of 8′ 21″, and that their rivals were at most 2′ less, which is not enough to secure a success. Or he may be going through some subtle piece of diplomacy,—persuading some man to row whose friends, or studies, or health forbid it, or simply lounging about in a dignified manner at some other resort, with the pleasant unconsciousness that men are whispering behind his back, "There is the stroke of the Boniface boat,"—as perhaps in the larger world, though vanity is no longer so simple or so easily satisfied, a man may like to be pointed out at a club as the future solicitor-general, or the best candidate for the vacant bishopric. Little knots of such enthusiasts gather together in each other's rooms, when they might be better employed, and discuss the prospects of the next race as eagerly as their elders canvass the state of the Funds. And the day ends, perhaps, with dinner and a prolonged chat with some celebrity of former times, who discourses of races won by eighteen inches, of the great struggle when the losing crew imitated the fabulous feat of the Vengeur, and rowed till the water reached to their waists, of the more ancient race when the immortal seven-oared crew defeated their antagonists with eight, and of contests in still remoter ages, some of the actors in which have long since attained to bishoprics or high state offices. Miserable trifling, you say, for a human being endowed with a soul, and with more or less reasoning powers. But that is exactly my point. A man is not a thorough historian till he grudges no expenditure of toil upon trifles, till he is ready to spend a week in determining the true Christian name of some one who died and was

forgotten by the world three centuries ago. He is not a lover till he cares about the smallest flower that has dropped from his mistress's hand. And, by a parity of reasoning, he cannot be thoroughly in love with an amusement till its very trifles become sacred in his eyes. The fact that some men spend many days of their youth after the manner I have described, is a proof of the intensity of the passion which rowing can occasionally inspire; and though some industrious men boast that it need only occupy a small part of their time, I think it is generally found to be like other objects of a devoted passion—rather jealous of any rival. Too warm an enthusiasm necessarily burns itself out in a short time; and few men have any opportunity to devote time to it in later life. There are very few navigable rivers where the art can be practised, especially after the epoch at which a man's stomach is inclined to interfere with his knees. Most oarsmen, therefore, confine their period of zeal to the years when they have no distraction more serious than their studies; or, in other words, can devote their whole time to rowing. And yet, though soon laid aside, there is no amusement which leaves behind it pleasanter memories. To be in the same boat with a man is a proverbial expression implying the closest conceivable bond of union. If you take a walking tour with a friend, there are hours at least during which he is your bitterest enemy, for no insult is more grievous than that put upon you by your partner in such a temporary alliance when he proposes with an off-hand air to increase the pace by a mile or so an hour, just as you have developed a peculiarly fine specimen of blister on the ball of the foot. It is not in human nature to be yoked to a fellow-creature in a tie of such a nature without occasionally finding that it galls. In such games, again, as cricket, I need hardly say that the pleasure of having made a good score frequently reconciles a man to a disgraceful defeat of his side. But the bond established for the time being between the members of a racing crew, is perhaps the closest known, with the single and doubtful exception of marriage. If Bow has a pain in his inside, its effects communicate themselves to Two, Three, Four, and down to Stroke. They are for the time being a consolidated whole, —like those polyps which, as natural historians tell us, live in a strange community with but one stomach amongst the lot. Anything that disagrees with one, is immediately felt by the rest. They have a common glory or a common disgrace; and the consequence is that in after life there is no bond which establishes a greater claim than that of having belonged to the same crew, whilst the next strongest claim is to have belonged to the rival crew. The Cam is a very ugly stream; perhaps, take it all together, the ugliest in Europe. Yet an old Cambridge oarsman, walking down its slimy banks, is often moved by a strange emotion, of course to be sternly suppressed. There is not a corner nor a reach which is not associated in his mind with triumphs or misfortunes of which it is the greatest pleasure that they

were encountered in common with the friends of perhaps the pleasantest parts of his life. If rowing does nothing else, it serves as a bond of unusual strength for drawing men together just at the time when their affections are, so to speak, most malleable and most cohesive; when they have the greatest faculty for receiving and retaining new impressions. Rowing brings back to me some unpleasant associations,—especially certain hardships endured in a perfectly absurd attempt to reduce myself to a state of unnatural weakness, which was called training,—but it is also so inseparably bound up with memories of close and delightful intimacies, that it almost makes me sentimental. To my mind, the pleasantest of all such bonds are those which we form with fellow-students by talking nonsense with them, and mistaking it for philosophy; but an average undergraduate wants some more material bond, and I know none which acts with more energy than a common devotion to such an absorbing amusement.

Of course, replies my friend, the memory of having been shut up in my youth in solitary confinement with one pleasant companion might be incidentally agreeable; and you may sincerely enjoy the recollection of a bondage endured with some early friends. Still you don't deny that it is a bondage, and a very strait bondage. You only say that the fact that you submitted to it proves that, for some inscrutable reason, you must have enjoyed it. But this suggests one other question. You liked your sport so much as to submit to great hardships in its pursuit; did you not like it so much as permanently to injure your health? The fanatical devotion to boating pursuits which indicates, if you please, a certain pleasure—to me quite inscrutable—in the amusement, must also lead to sacrifices of obvious sanitary considerations to this strange god.

That has been the subject, I answer, of a never-ending controversy. There is a floating legend which is always hurled at the heads of ambitious oarsmen. It is stated of a crew, which performed some astonishing feat, that every man was dead within two or three years. I have heard this legend applied to at least half a dozen crews, and in every case I have found that it was unfounded. Not long ago I met at Henley Regatta five members of one of the crews to which it is most commonly applied. They were all men of unusually healthy appearance for their time of life,—though perhaps a trifle fatter than might have been desired,—and I happened to know two others who were both at that time alive and well. I put down most such stories to the continued existence of what is called, I believe, the mythopœic faculty, which means the faculty of telling a lie in order to prove a doubtful proposition. Of late, however, one of those little controversies by which the Times kindly amuses our vacations and fills its columns has been raging on the subject; and a distinguished surgeon has given us

opinion very unfavourable to rowing. To speak candidly, I have not the least doubt that rowing sometimes causes severe evils to its more zealous devotees. I have known a large number of the most distinguished oarsmen for the last fifteen years, and very few of them, so far as I could tell, have suffered any injury from the result. Certainly, if I wished to produce models of health and strength, I should take some old University oarsmen; sturdy, square-shouldered, deep-chested men, who seem to have been put together of the best materials regardless of expense. I have known other cases, again, of men who have been quoted to me more than once as examples of the evil done by rowing, for whose weakness I could have assigned a very different cause. Rowing is undoubtedly a severe exertion, and it takes very little argument to prove that it is a dangerous amusement when combined with certain others of a less presentable kind. A rowing undergraduate is, of necessity, a youth in the full flush of strength and animal spirits, who labours under a total ignorance of some very necessary laws of health. Moreover, he is very often, I will not say generally, possessed of no particular ambition in regard to University studies. Consequently in the intervals of racing and training he is a fine, vigorous, and thoroughly idle young man. Now without relying upon the authority of Dr. Watts, we know that there is a personage who is occasionally in the habit of providing employment for the hands of young gentlemen of this class. Since rowing and other athletic sports have become almost an authorised part of the University system, and have therefore ceased to be in the slightest degree disreputable, rowing has no longer been left in the hands of those who are expressively called "fast" undergraduates; the average of morality may, therefore, be as high amongst the devotees of rowing as amongst other fragments of the little University world; but that is only saying that it includes a good many lads who are rather too fond of pleasure to be particular. There can be no doubt that when a man alternates periods of severe training with periods of undesirable indulgence, he is burning the candle at both ends, and is likely to pay the penalty. I mention this, which it is unnecessary to expand into detail, because I have known many cases in which, so to speak, the saddle has been put on the wrong horse, and rowing set down as the avowed cause of evils that in fact were due to a combination of rowing with much less legitimate amusements,—in some cases to the latter amusements only. When a young man has injured his constitution he tells his mother,—unless he has too strong remains of conscience,—that the evil is owing to the exhausting effects of overstudy;—in the same circumstances, he knows that his friends will require a slightly more plausible account, and he makes rowing the scapegoat. I could even mention cases in which a man has really injured his health by over-reading for examinations, but in which he persisted in attributing his ailments to having rowed two or three scratch races some years beforehand. It is the old story of giving a

dog a bad name. Any one who feels a pain in his leg says that the dog has bitten him.

After every deduction on this score, there doubtless remain cases —I know not whether many or few—in which rowing has been really the cause of grave and sometimes fatal diseases. Mr. Skey injured his case by over-statement, and by endeavouring to make out what every tyro in rowing knows to be absurd. He declared that over a four-mile course the boats raced at full speed the whole way, each struggling for the lead from start to finish. The thing is really impossible. Any crew that ever got into a boat might be rowed to a standstill in a quarter of the time, indeed in much less than that, if they really exerted their powers to their utmost limit. Nothing is a more acknowledged cause of defeat than an attempt to start at too many strokes a minute, and, in short, it is as mistaken a notion that boats go off at the top of their speed, as it would be that horses in the Derby do the same. For all this, long races such as those at Putney are a severe trial; and still more severe, in my opinion, are the races at Henley. The course there is shorter, but one man frequently rows three or four races in the day under a burning sun, and sometimes with the result, as I can testify, of complete prostration for the time. The committee ought, in my opinion, to put a stop to this practice,—even at the cost of diminishing the attractions of the Regatta. The great race at Putney, however, is undoubtedly severe enough, though the men seldom seem to suffer very much at the time. One great cause of the injury sometimes resulting was the absurd theory of training formerly prevalent, which, instead of enabling the men to bear the race, seemed carefully designed to weaken them. The doctrine which used to be current amongst young men, so far as there was any consistent doctrine at all, was adopted, I imagine, from that current amongst prize-fighters, who, whatever their other merits, are not qualified to give very trustworthy medical opinions. A prize-fighter was generally an older man, accustomed to a rougher style of living, and bloated by attendance at public-houses. It was a great thing to cut off his liquor, to sweat down his superfluous fat, and to put him on a simple diet. When University lads were trained on the same principles, it was something like training a two-year old in the same fashion as an aged horse. They had been accustomed to a varied, though not immoderate diet, and were suddenly reduced to great masses of raw beef steak, of which it was a point of honour to swallow as much as possible, with the natural consequences of boils, indigestions, and various other inconveniences. Then, although they were generally in good condition and wind, it was held that they must be sweated till they had lost perhaps a stone in weight, and a man was proud of the number of pounds of which he could get rid. There was a theory about "internal fat," which was supposed somehow or other

to fill up a man's inside, and impede the action of his other organs. It was thought that this might be melted down whilst the muscles were strengthened by steady exercise. I am no physiologist, but I imagine that the human frame has a more delicate and complex organisation than this mechanical theory implies, and that you can't safely melt bits of it out, any more than you can cut bits out, without a danger of deranging the other organs. In short, men were over-fed with indigestible lumps of meat, and at the same time were reduced arbitrarily in weight till they frequently came to the final contest in the lowest tone of health, and broke down immediately afterwards. I hope that more sensible modes of treatment have lately come into fashion, and that even the astonishing fact has been learnt that different men have different constitutions, and consequently require different styles of treatment. And I feel no doubt that with reasonable precautions, the exercise of boat-racing might be made as safe as any other strong exercise. Only the authorities should certainly take care, as they might with perfect ease, that men should not join in such contests without due medical authorisation in all doubtful cases.

What you say, my friend would reply, is doubtless admirable. You have shown, to your own satisfaction at any rate, that rowing implies an amount of skill, of energy, and of judgment, which makes it an admirable school for many good qualities; that it is a sport which is pursued with a spirit which proves it to be really enjoyable, and that with due precautions it need not be hurtful to the health. I will add,—without troubling you to prove it,—that the love of such athletic pursuits is a very admirable characteristic of English institutes, and, so long as it is preached with common-sense and without cant, deserves the approval of all intelligent persons. But with your permission I must ask one question more;—is not the devotion to such pursuits somewhat incompatible with a due devotion to study? Universities should encourage athletic sports, but surely not to the prejudice of learning.

To this my reply would be—Pray look at that admirable specimen of Early English architecture which you are in danger of passing unnoticed. Or if no such specimen were at hand, I should endeavour to hit upon some other means for giving a new turn to a conversation which threatened to become embarrassing.

STEPHEN LANGTON.

A CHAPTER ON THE CHARTER.

We broach no new doctrine, nor take an isolated position, when we say that much of the history—especially of the early and middle ages—of our country remains to be written. Our most trustworthy and painstaking historians have too credulously accepted the testimony of chroniclers who have written with the narrow animus of partisans, and have surveyed events and men through eyes so jaundiced by personal enmity and petty jealousy, that to many of these writings there cannot be accorded a higher level than to political pamphlets in the present day; and often the historians themselves, unable or not sufficiently diligent to prosecute their inquiries to a reliable basis, have summed up their own ignorance by stigmatising the people of the particular place and period as a race of barbarians of whom no records remain, or as the people of a dark age. Thanks to the patient industry of antiquarians, archæologists, and local historians, who are occupied within their own localities disentombing musty and forgotten records, unravelling the tangled web of family histories, and tracing their connection with the national story, reading the chronicles of mounds and monuments, and interpreting the voices of scattered relics,—thanks to these men, many of our received notions are being blown away, and it will soon be within the power of some master spirit, working amidst these materials, to pace firmly and confidently along, and write something more than a budget of unsatisfactory theories about our ancestors. Already we have conceded much of that obloquy which was wont to be showered down upon Cromwell, and we no longer stigmatise him as a designing tyrant seeking only his own elevation; whilst, on the other hand, we are beginning to see that notwithstanding the whitewash of Hume and Clarendon, no palliation can be offered for the character and conduct of the Stuarts; no one now-a-days, with any regard to his reputation as an historical authority, would commit himself to the term barbarous, as applied to our early ancestors, the ancient Britons; Richard III. has ceased to be the repulsive mental and physical deformity at which, as children, we were taught to shudder; to us Becket is no patriot, nor Hudibras an historian. We are opening our eyes to the fact that our established authorities, from Bede to Clarendon, are either voices from the cells of monks, whose world lay within the four walls of their domicile, or the prose minstrelsy of rewarded bards, glorifying the

deeds of their patrons and blackening those of their opponents. Virgil, hampered by kind offices, gives to his patron a fame foretold in the days when Rome existed but in the creative will of the gods, and asserts that in the circling ages,

> "Nascetur pulchra Trojanus origine Cæsar
> Imperium oceano famam qui terminet astris
> Julius a magno demissum nomen Iulo."—Æn. Lib. I. 286.

And so it was with historians in the early and middle ages. Writing under the wings of kings and princes, the only encouragers of the writer's art, they invariably tried to trace the power and position of their patron or hero to some masterstroke of providential wisdom and foresight, whilst his enemies are invariably huddled together to form a dark background, the more fully to contrast the glories of the great centre-piece.

We have another remark to make, and that in regard to the writers of school histories. With all deference to the gentlemen recently so warmly engaged in the controversy about the Latin accidence, there is a subject of wider importance in our national educational system, of which the text-books are in a very unsatisfactory state. Nothing can be more worthless or absurd than the historical knowledge of the school-boys and girls of the present day. We dare venture to say that while at two-thirds of our schools the majority would be able to tell the exact numbers killed in all the important battles, and all the stories about the Black Prince and Cœur de Lion which are pure fiction, while they could tell how Alfred burnt the cakes, and William I. was so strong that no one could bend his bow or handle his sword, would perhaps know the position of the Barebones Parliament in history because it is an amusing name, and be able to repeat all the adventures of the old and young Chevaliers, they could tell nothing of our great social and political struggles, of charters won and principles advanced; they know nothing of the martyrs of liberty, or the pioneers of freedom, nothing of those of our forefathers who sowed in tears and watered with their blood the germs of all that is contained in the proud boast, Civis Anglicanus sum; and if you spoke to them of such names as Langton, Moore, Pym, Hampden, and others, they would stare at you in blank silence. To them the teachings of history are of gaudy trapped warriors and deeds of prowess and mystery; of the greater struggles of their forefathers they know nothing. It is painful to notice how daily, in all classes of society, the consciousness of this poverty of historical knowledge is forced upon us. Nor are many of our leading professional examinations much more than a farce upon historical acquirements. The writer remembers some time ago having to pass a professional examination, and on the history paper being handed to him, the first question that met his eye was the old stock one, "Name three of the greatest generals, and your

reason." Such is the trammelling effect of our text-books that, in what is looked upon as one of the most learned occupations of life, such trash goes to make up an examination in history.

When history becomes true to her high vocation, Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury (1207—1228), will stand out as the most prominent figure in the records of the Plantagenet line; and yet we shall be speaking within bounds if we say that he is, at the present day, the least known of all our country's benefactors, historians great and small having seemingly conspired to grant him honours as grudgingly as possible. Even Hallam, usually so rigidly just, has dismissed his services in a couple of lines.* It is his life, as bound up in the great foundation of English liberty, we propose briefly to trace in the present paper.

Whether we view Langton as a scholar, an ecclesiastic, or a statesman, we shall find him alike worthy of the best efforts of the biographer and the closest scrutiny of the student; but it is mainly as a statesman, disinterested amidst so much selfishness, generous amidst so much petty tyranny, pure amidst so many inducements to self-aggrandisement, morally brave amidst so much moral cowardice,—the counterpart in everything of his king,—that he merits a page in history. There is a great dearth of materials for the life of Langton, and his character is chronicled in great deeds rather than in the fulsome biographies of his contemporaries. The curtain of uncertainty first draws aside to reveal to us the young student at Paris, eminent as a poet, a biblical scholar, and a lawyer, and the friend of the future Innocent III. When the latter was called to the papal chair, probably influenced by the double motive of promoting the advancement of his friend, and at the same time wishing to strengthen his councils by having near him as a trusted adviser one of such great ability, of whose interest he was assured, he summoned Langton to Rome, in 1206, in order to confer upon him the office of cardinal-priest; but even before his induction into this office events were conspiring to call him to a still more elevated post. In July of the previous year, Hubert, Archbishop of Canterbury, died; and consequent thereon arose a quarrel as to the right of appointing a successor. The monks of Christchurch possessed the right of voting in the election of their archbishop, and some of the junior canons met secretly and nominated their sub-prior, Reginald. The king and the senior canons were enraged at this act of temerity in filling so important a post without their concurrence, and appointed the Bishop of Norwich; while the suffragans, forming a third body, dissented from both, and all three parties appealed to Rome. Various motives no doubt moved Innocent III. to set aside both elections, and prefer in their stead one who from continued intercourse he had found of unblemished probity, and who, from the mas-

* "Middle Ages," vol. ii. p. 327.

culine vigour of his mind, was capable of upholding the interests of the Church in this distant and at times somewhat refractory province, while his distinguished abilities would grace so high a position. Accordingly he directed the monks forming the deputations of appeal to make choice of Langton. After some demur, conquered by a threat of excommunication, they submitted; and in the following year (1207) Langton was consecrated Primate of England. There was little of auspicious promise in the tyrannical act by which Langton was thrust upon the English Church. He received his appointment by a stretch of prerogative which the best period of his life was bent upon opposing. It may be wondered that he should be willing to receive his appointment under these circumstances. But when we consider the doctrine of implicit obedience to the Father of the Church which he had been educated under, the probability that such a stretch of power was not uncommon at Rome, and the factious spirit in which the appeal was made, we can easily suppose that he saw nothing in the means to repel him from the end.

John, when informed of the conduct of the Pope, flew into a towering passion, and, with his usual blasphemy, swore by God's teeth that the appointment of the Bishop of Norwich should be completed and confirmed. He expelled the monks of Christchurch, and confiscated their revenues. Innocent, in retaliation, placed the country under an Interdict (1208), followed by excommunication of John (1209). Thus the struggle of threats and recriminations went on until 1212, when the Pope produced the forged decretals giving him power to depose a monarch for immoralities. He at once declared John to be deposed, gave the kingdom to Philip of France, and encouraged all Europe to join the league against him as a holy crusade. John, alarmed at the preparations of Philip, but still more by the intelligence of disaffection in his own army, submitted; and in May, 1213, did homage to Pandulph, the Pope's legate, agreeing to Langton's appointment, and resigning England and Ireland "to St. Peter and St. Paul, and to Pope Innocent and his successors in the apostolic chair." Under protection of this submission, and a warrant of safe conduct, Stephen Langton landed at Dover in July; and it is with his life for the next three years that our task primarily concerns itself,—it is now that we have the display of that broad catholic patriotism which in itself forms such a noble study.

Pending the controversy betwixt John and the Pope, Langton had taken up his residence at the monastery of Pontigny, where the tranquillity of the place called him to his books and studies, which, notwithstanding his participation in public affairs, were at once his most congenial pursuits and his favourite refuge. Pontigny had been the residence of Thomas A'Becket, on the occasion of his flight from Henry II., fifty years before; and this, coupled with the fact that Langton himself, from a mistaken estimate of Becket's

character and a slight similarity of their positions, had elevated him into an ideal, has caused a comparison to be instituted between the two archbishops. But their characters are widely different. Becket was a proud, overbearing, bigoted churchman, ever attempting to elevate the ecclesiastical above the civil power, thus making the Church the refuge of crime and infamy. His concern for the Church was a mere exaggerated estimate of the necessity of great temporal power being placed in the hands of the Church. He lacked conciliation and discretion, and his displays of power were as offensive to good taste as they were nauseous to those who came within their range. His great principle seems to have been to make every one who came within his influence smart under a sense of inferiority, and in his proud insolence he once insisted upon the king holding his stirrup whilst he mounted his horse. Langton, on the contrary, was never a mere ecclesiastic; though primate of the Romish Church, he never forgot that he was an Englishman; though the first on the peerage-roll, that he was still a man; and thus, while he rejected unlimited power as the price of his desertion of the popular cause, in drafting the Charter he claims that the privileges granted to the knights in capite shall by them, in turn, be granted to their vassals and villeins.

While at Pontigny, Langton had been in correspondence with the English barons, who, roused by the rapacious exactions, the outrageous tyranny, and the unscrupulous conduct, both in public and private, of King John, had formed themselves into a league to resist his lawless practices, and check his villainies. With these barons Langton had taken counsel concerning the unhappy state of the country; he had been privy to that disaffection which had mainly induced the submission of John to the Pope; on them more than on the safe conduct of John he had relied for protection in England. And thus, when he landed in this country he found himself at the head of two great struggles which ultimately clashed in his person, and to some extent paralysed his powers,—he was not only the representative of the Pope claiming the supremacy of the Church, but the leader of a great party struggling for popular rights and liberties. Langton supplied what the barons most needed,—a head and a calm counsellor. The feudal system,—or rather that, coupled with the turmoil of Stephen's reign,—had engendered a universal distrust of each other amongst the barons; they were totally unused to act together, and had to learn that there was such a thing as unity of interest; but this they were fast learning under the tutorship of John. They were men perhaps of not very brilliant intellect, but of strong common-sense; more trained in the arts of war than the cavils of law, they knew little of jurisprudence, but they were conscious of defrauded rights, and were willing to die for them if they had but one to speak for them, to utter their complaints and demand their privileges. True, at first they were dubious and hesitant; their very instincts and every surrounding influence taught

them that kingly prerogative was almost unlimited. Nor should we wonder that it needed more than ordinary courage to break loose from all their traditions,—to fight against the banner they had been wont to follow,—to lift the sword where they used to bend the knee. With what joy must they have hailed the advent of Langton, when he showed them that the rights they demanded were theirs by ancient charter, to be guarded by them as they valued their knightly oaths.

In his first public act we see how faithfully Langton fulfilled the duties of his double office, how while he exacted an oath of fealty to Innocent III., he, with a foresight not to be too highly appreciated, mindful of the future interests of the nation, compelled John to swear "that he would renew all the good laws of his ancestors, especially those of King Edward; * that he would annul bad ones, would judge his subjects according to the just decrees of his courts, and would restore his rights to each and all." † In the restitution—which followed this return of John to the bosom of the Church—of those who had suffered from the interdict by deprivation of their benefices, and by exile, Langton gave an indication of the independent course of resistance to oppression he intended to pursue, by siding with the poor clergy against the king, backed as he was in his wrong-doing by the Pope. Thus early did his two offices clash.

Received again into the Church, the disaffection at home lulled, all his apparent differences adjusted, John, in the pride of his regained power, resolved to punish his great rival, Philip of France. Having appointed a regent, he summoned his council and set out on his expedition. The council met shortly after the departure of the king, and here it was that Langton first openly assumed the leadership of the patriots, and in a later council (August, 1213) he bound the barons together with an oath, and placed a definite object before them by reminding them that in absolving the king he had made him promise to observe the good "laws of Edward the Confessor." And if this was not a sufficiently definite basis to claim redress upon, he produced that charter which Henry I. had granted immediately upon his succession to the throne in order to conciliate the people to his usurpation. The most important provisions of this charter were promises "to do away with all the evil practices with which the kingdom of England is now unjustly oppressed," and "to restore to you the law of King Edward,

* "The people had begun to look back to a more ancient standard of law. The Norman conquest and all that had ensued upon it, had endeared the memory of their Saxon government. . . . Hence it became the favourite cry to demand the laws of Edward the Confessor. . . . But what these laws were, or more properly perhaps, these customs subsisting in the Confessor's age, was not very distinctly understood. . . . In claiming the laws of Edward the Confessor our ancestors meant but the redress of grievances which tradition told them had not always existed."—Hallam, Middle Ages, vol. ii. p. 324.

† Roger of Wendover, p. 329.

with the amendments * which my father by the advice of his barons made in it." † The production and reading of this almost forgotten charter spurred on the barons, rousing the greatest enthusiasm amongst them, and they unanimously vowed that they would wrest back with the sword a confirmation of this charter to their fathers. Proclamations were then issued in the name of the king, commanding the laws of Henry I. to be observed, and denouncing punishment against those tools of John who were still carrying out his policy. This strange course of proceeding was not long in reaching the ear of John, and in the following year he returned highly incensed, resolved to punish his audacious council, and nip in the bud this incipient rebellion.

In the spring of 1215, having assembled an army, he marched northwards, pillaging and destoying everything in his path. Langton with his retinue met him at Northampton, and sternly demanded an explanation of his conduct, and reminded him of his oath when he absolved him at Winchester, and said, "This barbarous violence is a direct breach of your oath. You are bound in the first place, if there is cause of offence, to summon the offenders to your courts, that they may be tried and judged by their peers." "Rule you the Church, and leave me to rule the State," was the king's infuriated reply, as he dismissed the primate. John continued the march, but Langton followed him, and loftily rebuked his conduct. John, finding that threats and harsh words were ineffective upon the prelate, wilily resolved upon bribery, and granted to the clergy a charter relinquishing to them the prerogative of free election on the occurrence of all vacancies. But he had to deal with a man as pure as he was brave; and as in the meanwhile the barons had assembled an army in every way superior to his own, and which they called "the army of God and the Holy Church," John saw no hope in open resistance, and consented to call a convocation of the barons, or, following the quaint language of the old historian, "The king finding the barons so resolute in their demands, was much concerned at their impetuosity. When he saw that they were furnished for battle, he replied that it was a great and difficult thing which they asked, from which he required a respite until after Easter, that he might have space for consideration; and if it were in the power of himself or the dignity of the Crown, they should receive satisfaction. But at length, after many proposals, the king unwillingly consented that the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Ely, and William Marshal (Earl of Pembroke) should be made sureties, and that by their intercession

* The reference may probably be to that Charter of William the Conqueror which is well authenticated and runs thus: "We will, enjoin, and grant that all freemen of our kingdom shall enjoy their lands in peace, free from all tallage and from every unjust exaction, so that nothing but their service lawfully due to us shall be demanded at their hands."—See Hallam, Middle Ages, p. 325, and note xi. p. 415.

† Mekins, p. 310.

on the day fixed he would satisfy all." * In the meanwhile he sent to the Pope for protection. Innocent immediately and peremptorily ordered Langton to support John against the barons. Again his two offices clashed. But heedless of the mandate of the Pope, Langton encouraged the barons not to desist. On the appointed day the barons assembled, two thousand strong, with a long train of armed attendants. John, who kept a safe distance from them, sent to know their demands. A schedule, containing a recital of the laws, &c., they claimed, was handed to the deputation, and upon their presenting it to the king he answered, "Why do they not at once demand my crown? By God's teeth, no liberties shall be granted to those whose object is to make me their slave." In vain Langton and Pembroke advised the king to comply with the demand of his subjects; he appealed to his favourite arbitrator—arms—and fled to London. The barons accepted the appeal, and marched upon his castles, and on to London, their ranks swelling at every step, all classes flocking to the "army of God and the Church." Alarmed at their progress, the king agreed to a conference at Runymede, and named the 9th of June, afterwards postponed to the 15th. Thither on the appointed day came the contending parties, the barons with a countless number of retainers, John with but seven followers, and there, after much negotiating, the "Articuli Magnæ Cartæ," afterwards expanded into "Magna Charta," received the royal seal, 15th June, 1215. History does not expressly inform us what hand drafted this great document, but there can be no doubt of it. One only of that immense throng of barons could have done it, and it remains to the present day a model piece of legislature. Jurists may cavil at its untechnical forms, critics may laugh at its rude Latinity, but nor jurists nor critics can deny its terseness, compactness, unambiguity, and sufficiency. There is no superfluity, nor anything wanting. And if Langton had done nothing more than to draft this document, he would have deserved the most kindly remembrance from his countrymen. But when we remember how, in spite of the greatest inducements to withdraw his support, he had preserved his integrity to this cause, how that he had prevented the great barons from being bought into desertion by a promise of great privileges to their order, and how he endangered his very position as primate by his fidelity, we begin to feel a deeper debt than mere words can repay. Without any wish to disparage or underrate the services of Pembroke and those other barons who co-operated with him, we do not speak unadvisedly when we say that without Langton's aid no deed so comprehensive as Magna Charta would have been obtained until a much later period, nor indeed would any charter at all have been obtained for many years. Had he merely taken a negative position, his very indifference would have paralysed them; but had he actively sided with John, the confederation must have inevitably been destroyed.

* Mathew Paris.

We do not say but that concessions of some kind must have been made. The yoke was becoming too heavy to be borne. But those concessions would probably have been very bare. John, wily and cunning, had a thousand crafts against men less clear-sighted and trained in the ways of the world than Langton. Langton was to the people such a leader as none else could have been. His administrative abilities were of a high order; difficulties seemed to vanish under his touch, the most tortuous path opened up clear before his eye, every emergency was found provided for at the critical moment;—there were the barons ready equipped to enforce the demand for a conference; there was the schedule of broken laws when asked for: and, above all, there was the broad comprehensive Charter, well pondered, and widely inclusive, when the time came to demand its acceptance. His powers of conciliation and of inspiring confidence were equally prominent. Of the necessity of his leadership to the barons we need no greater proof than subsequent events, when, on the recall of Langton to Rome, they were scattered before John like chaff before the wind.

Of the details of the Charter it is not our province to speak. A document so frequent on the tongues of all should surely be too well known to need quotation; and, merely endorsing the opinion of one of our historians, that no new principle of liberty has been infused into our Constitution since its date, but that every subsequent constitutional struggle has been fought round some one or other of its provisions, we resume the thread of our narrative.

John, we remarked, had appealed to the Pope, who, immediately that he heard of the extremity to which his now favourite vassal was pushed by his subjects, issued a Bull against them, of which the following is the essence:—"That the insolence of such men may not prevail, not only to the danger of the Church of England, but also to the ruin of other kingdoms, and above all to the subversion of all the matters of Christ, we . . . lay the fetters of excommunication on all the disturbers of the king and kingdom of England, as well as on all the accomplices and abettors of theirs, and place their possessions under the ecclesiastical interdict." Then follows an order to the archbishop and all the bishops to publicly proclaim and carry into force this punishment, with suspension as the penalty of their non-compliance. Langton, who had been previously summoned to a convention at Rome, having now seen the triumph of the popular cause, prepared for his departure, and had proceeded as far as Dover when he was met by Pandulph and the Bishop of Winchester, bearing this Bull, annulling the Charter, and excommunicating its authors. They imposed upon Langton the duty of reading it, and announced their orders to proclaim his suspension if he refused. He did refuse, and proceeded to Rome. He was coldly received by the Pope, and his temporary suspension confirmed. This in reality closes the career

of Langton as a statesman. Once only again he appeared potentially; that was on his restoration, in 1218, when he assisted at the coronation of Henry III., and obtained the renewal of the Charter, with one or two important additions. Nor shall we impose upon ourselves the painful task of tracking the progress of liberty through the gloomy period that intervened betwixt his suspension and restoration. We know how John assembled an army of mercenaries, and, regardless of his kingly oath, marched through the country devastating, destroying, and pillaging, a course which drew from the old historian, Mathew of Paris, the despairing lament, "Alas, England! England, till now the chief of provinces, in all kinds of wealth, thou art a land under tribute; subject not only to fire, famine, and the sword, but to the rule of ignoble slaves and foreigners, than which no curse can be worse!" We know, too, how the barons, reduced to despair, offered the crown to Louis, the son of Philip, and the preparations for war that ensued; till John, worn out with disease and sickness, died at Newark, and thus prepared the way for an end to this chaotic disorder. But these events do not legitimately come within our present scope, except as illustrating the loss sustained in Langton. To attempt to say what would have been the result had Langton been permitted to remain, would of course be mere idle speculation, but it is more than probable that much of this unhappiness might have been prevented by his so doing.

As we have said, the public career of Langton terminated with the coronation ceremony of Henry III. The remainder of his life was passed in the almost unbroken performance of his ecclesiastical functions, and on the 9th of July, 1228, he quietly passed away from this life, in which he had played so noble and manly a part. Posterity will yet learn to do him justice, to love and reverence his memory, and to dwell on his name as a precious heritage. Slowly, as from other great names, the mists shall clear away, revealing to us the man in all his greatness,—one in that long chain of men who through dark hours have struggled for light, and towards the light, and the first who dared openly to teach the limitations of the king's prerogative.

A CITY APOLOGUE.

I LOVE the grey old City's storied walls.
Not all the glare and turmoil of the day,
The hum and whirl of commerce in the streets,
Can dim for me the light of old romance,
That gilds its hoary monuments and towers.

I love to see the quiet dignity
With which, when work is done and night draws on
And all the din of footsteps fades away,
It shakes from off its flanks the ebbing tide
Of busy life, slips off the glare of day,
Wraps round its walls the mantle of the past
And settles back to its historic calm,
As if no break divided its long rest.

And ever, in the golden calm of eve,
When the clear sky grows dim towards the dusk,
Its streets for me are thick with memories,
Stately and sweet and sorrowful. I hear
The feet of Sidney echo on the stones,
And see, in silence, noble Raleigh's face,
Pale with long prison, peer from out the bars
Upon a shadowy crowd. But not alone
My fancy dwells upon the peopled past.
I have no taint of that unlovely scorn
That sees no beauty save in things long dead,
No sweetness in the world we live amongst.
I feel that, in the new as in the old,
Great deeds are possible, heroic lives
Lived nobly and true deaths died faithfully;
And please myself to find out quiet lives,
That have bloomed bravely in the City smoke,
And souls whose clear eternal Spring of love
Has made those lives immortal. Many such,
Unknown to fame, have blossomed, lived and died,
Quiet dull lives, whose course the peace of God
Has, as the sky on broad, unrippled streams,
Filled with reflected heaven. Such a life,

Uncelebrate and sweet, my memory holds
Within its holiest casket, as one lays
A graven gem in velvet. One, whose path
Of years I love to follow, all his life
Dwelt in the City's dim and sunless shade,
And there, from early youth to quiet death,
Worked hardly at dull toil for daily bread;
One of those earnest, tender-hearted men
We find sometimes among hard-handed folk,
Whose souls' mute poetry, expressionless,
Is hidden by the sameness of their lives,
To him God's world was one great fairy tale,
As sad and sweet as such tales use to be.
With heart too large to hold aught else but love,
He had but few to love. The delicate
And shrinking clearness of his mental sense
Kept him aloof from those who shared his task,
And he was lonely in the world of men.

His soul was full of sweet and tender doubt.
Across the hum and whirl of toil he oft
Looked, with mute wistfulness, at that great world
Of fame and action that, thus seen afar,
Was lovely to him as the rainbow is,
That is our symbol of unreal hope.
And there were times when he would grieve to think
He could not serve God in some nobler way.
He felt a barrier lay 'twixt him and it,
A wall of crystal, that he could not pass.
And so he did but yearn, and to his work
Turned dumbly. Yet the chrism of his love
Rounded his life-work to ideal shape,
Unknown to him, and all his heart was full
Of such a deep and sweet humanity,
His life grew fragrant with the inner soul;
And weary folk, who passed him in the streets,
Saw Christ's love beam from out the wistful eyes,
And had new confidence in God and man.
And so he worked and longed, and lived and loved,
Did noble deeds, not knowing what he did,
Thought noble thoughts, unconscious of their worth,
And lived that greatness he desired in vain.

One friend he had, as poor as he, perhaps,
But rich in hope; one of those wide-souled men
Whose natural mission seems the cure of souls,

Lark-hearted, with a natural trick of song,
He looked on all with clear and hopeful eyes,
And, with a thinker's trustful tenderness,
Tried all things in the crucible of thought.

He loved the gentle, humble-minded man,
And had long drawn from him his secret soul,
As tenderly as Spring draws primrose-blooms
From the young earth. And once, when they had talked
A while together, and some chance had turned
The converse on the worker's long desire,
The thinker rose, and pacing up and down,
Said to his friend, "Had you told Hafiz this,
The poet who brought down the golden sun,
And with it made his verses glad and bright,
He might have answered somewhat in this wise,
Veiling, as was his wont, the barb of thought
Under the wreathing blooms of metaphor."

Then he took up his parable and spoke.

"A lily grew upon the plains of Fars,
And drank the living radiance of the sun,
And fed her fill upon those golden dews
That Persian poets call the tears of God.
Around her lay a paradise of sweets.
Narcissus cups and stately amaranths,
And many another gorgeous Eastern flower,
Hid the brown earth with rainbow-coloured blooms.
And now and then, when the light morning breeze
Inclined the lily's stalk towards the dim
Horizon's golden edge, the regal bloom
Of roses met her vision, and she knew
Their scent upon the perfumed winds of heaven,
Wherewith the evening cooled the glowing plains.
But she herself stood on a little hill,
Unmated and alone, a stretch of sand
Parting her from the crowd of kindred blooms.
Great grief to her this was; it seemed as if
Her place had been forgotten in the plan,
And she alone could have no part in God,
Nor work for Nature, as her comrades did.

"The distant hum of some small neighbouring towns,
Where afar off dwelt sparsely-scattered men,
Came to her, sweetened by the breath of flowers.

At times she heard the tinkling camel-bells,
Sparkles of sound upon a murmurous sea,
And her heart yearned to grow towards the world,
And take her share of duty with the rest.
And with the yearning brighter grew her bloom,
And richer grew the fragrance of her breath,
Until the air was filled with that sweet scent,
The dew and essence of immortal love;
And from afar the perfume of the flower
Was wafted unto many a toiling man,
So that he felt refreshed and comforted
And said, 'What angel hovers in the air?
I smell the almond-blooms of Paradise.'

"So sweet it was that, over all the rest,
An angel, hovering o'er the neighbouring flowers,
Caught the unearthly fragrance, which recalled
To him the odorous balms of his own heaven,
And, nestling in the lily's cup, he felt
The stir of yearning at its fragrant heart,
And comprehending, with the skill of love,
All that lay hidden in its candid soul,
'Take heart,' said he, 'white lily. God is sweet;
And life that is not sweet has little God.
Who thinks a life, unstirred by sounding deeds
And void of settled aim save love and peace,
Is dutiless, knows little of the links
Of purpose that connect all natural things.
Life is lived less in action than in thought,
And all its aims are summarized in love.
Thou givest all thyself. Can God give more?
Would'st thou give more than God, love more than Love?
Be comforted; thou hast the praise of God.'

"And the white flower was sorrowful no more."

CUMBERLAND PHOTOGRAPHS.

THERE are always queer people to be found in country places, where character is not pressed flat by the weight of public opinion, and where individualism may run even into eccentricity without rebuke; but I do not think that so many odd characters could be found anywhere as have lived at various times in Keswick and the hamlets about. The railroad and the schoolmaster will change all this, too, in time, and the eccentricities of the dales and villages will melt away; but meanwhile it is pleasant to remember and secure what one can of the old, old life, before its quaint lines are entirely effaced by the monotonous wash of universal civilisation.

In my younger days we had but one draper's shop in Keswick which the gentry and better sort of farmers would patronise; the rest were mere jerry-shops, keeping calicoes with gingerbread, and not visited by the local aristocracy. But the shop was kept by an old lady,—and she was a lady, though a draper,—who well deserves a full-length photograph, if I can take it through the indistinct haze of time. But she belongs to a time quite long-ago, and memories are not cut out of granite. She was an old maid,—prim, precise, severe,—the very soul of respectability; holding Church and State and a prudent demeanour in as much regard as she held levity and freethinking in abhorrence. But prim and severe as she looked, I believe she was full of human kindness; and I know that she was full of probity and honour. There was something immensely imposing in her as she sat behind the counter in the rustling black silk gown, with a high white cap crowning her false front, or "top-knot," as it was called then, a white muslin kerchief across her bosom, and black silk mittens on her withered hands. She was not of the school that waits upon the public. Quite the contrary. She did the public a favour by serving it with Irish linens and Manchester long-cloths; and did not fail to make her higher position felt when the little bell, hung upon the half shop-door, tinkled its announcement of an incomer. It was more like a visitor going to pay his respects as an act of courtesy, or a suitor about to beg a favour, than a buyer with pretensions on the principle of supply and demand. And she was by no means of the new cheap school; nor did she understand anything about small profits and quick returns. She gave long credit; and her goods were of the best quality to be had in the market, and, as she used to say, cheaper in the long run than "nasty make-ups." No modern fal-fals for her; no flimsy

mixtures of silk and wool and cotton and shoddy, where the colours would run and the stuff cockle at the first shower of rain,—the first "Keswick day!" No "devil's dust" should soil her counter. Whatever she had was of the best of its kind, and an article warranted by "Miss Crosthwaite" was sure to be as genuine as herself. She sat behind her counter, in her black silk and snowy muslin, with all the stately dignity of a gentle-mannered duchess, as sure of her repute and deserving as the best born in the place; and she was asked to tea and shaken hands with by the older-fashioned gentry as cordially as if she had been a Derwentwater at the least. Once, when I was a wee bit lassie in a scarlet spencer and clumping clogs, she took me into her back parlour and gave me some tea and cake. But my profound awe of the dear old lady, whose sharp face looked so prim and severe, and whose keen grey eyes seemed to see through everything from behind their silver spectacles, interfered wofully with my appetite, and took all the sweetness out of the honey cake and the glory out of the tea.

After her solid and despotic reign we had a mushroom republic of petty princes; and one enterprising shopkeeper, still extant and go-ahead, conceived the idea of made-goods, as carried out at Shoolbred's and elsewhere. He gave great offence when he first imported bonnets, and was looked on as an enemy to his fellow-townsmen,—a kind of commercial shark with poaching propensities in excess of his natural functions; for straw-bonnet making was practised by one hand in Keswick, and the head milliner of the place undertook those of silk and gauze. Consequently he trod too closely for liking on the heels of both these workers, and got rarely miscalled for his pains.

To help on the flagging trade of the place, and bring in new ideas, sadly wanted, travellers and pedlars came round at intervals, bringing silks, and shawls, and jewellery, and knickknacks that seemed to our young untaught eyes as beautiful as anything to be dug up out of Aladdin's cave. We used to be called into the kitchen, as a great treat, to see Pedroni's treasures laid carefully on the dresser, and many were the exhortations we received "not to touch," and many the slaps and pokes on our chubby red piratical hands. Pedroni was a tall dark Swiss, deeply pitted with the small-pox; and the very ideal of a pedlar merchant. He was extremely good-natured, and fond of us children, and always brought us up a screw of "goodies," whether my father bought of him or no. We were not very good customers at the Vicarage; there were too many hungry little mouths to feed to leave my poor father much margin for fineries, and we were just as happy with a sixpenny necklace of blue glass beads, or a brooch made of a pin stuck through a pearl bead, as our children are to-day with gold lockets and silver buckles, and half a dozen brooches of diverse material, and of every conceivable pattern. After the peripatetic temptations of Pedroni, we had the stationary allurements of Wills

Fisher, who united jewellery and hair-cutting in a not unproductive connection; and then we came to special shops of native jewellery, made out of our fell-side agates and crystals. But this was after the good old times had been done away with, never to return, and when Keswick took to ambition, and making money, and clothing herself according to the fashion of southern towns; when all our old conservatism and clanship were split asunder by the introductien of novel wedges of all kinds, and the society, which had once been like a large family topped by chiefs and fringed with dependants, became a mere congregation of acquaintances, with just a closer gathering here and there of the old survivors, still holding together as friends. We have grown fashionable now, heaven help us! and town-bred, and luxurious with the age.

I suppose there is a Gotham in every country district, and that the stories fathered on the wise men of that region descend in succession to every other set of sages of the like pattern. Our Gotham is, or was, Borrowdale; and a "Borrowdale gowk" is still the term of reproach among the coarser sort when the drink's in and the bridle's out. A gowk is indiscriminately cuckoo or fool; and the story goes that once when a cuckoo flew into the Borrowdale gorge and alighted on the ground, the dalesmen began to build a wall round her to keep her with them for ever, and, with her, eternal spring. But when they had built and built a gay gude while, the cuckoo rose and flew away, just brushing the topmost stone with her wings; and "Nae, but that waur a pity if ivver there was ane," said the Borrowdale men when they told the story;" "ae stane mair, an' t' gowk 'ud a' been wa'ed in as fine as euld be!" True or false, the story has stuck to the dalesmen from time immemorial; and to ask a Borrowdale man, "Weel! an' hoo's t' Borr'dale gowk, mon?" will more likely than not lead to fisticuffs and black eyes on Saturday nights, when lile sups here and the lile sups there, unfortunately so frequent on market days, have made some men irritating and others quarrelsome. There are other stories of Gothamite complexion ascribed to Borrowdale, but they are not so popular nor so distinctive as this about the cuckoo, and not so generally known.

An anecdote used to be told of a clever, crafty workman not long dead, which also, I believe, is not quite original. George was courting an heiress;—"Nay, what! a ra'al leddy, wi' a gay lock o' brass til her name;"—and he was anxious to impress her with a sense of his own riches and importance. For he had given himself out as a man of property, and quite a fit match for his heiress with her couple of hundreds, or more, and it was incumbent on him to show cause for his assertion, and to prove himself as good as his word. So, when she very naturally asked him where these grand estates of his laid, he hired a gig and drove the ra'al lady for some miles out of Keswick, on the Penrith road. At a certain spot just by Halton Moor, where

they had a fine broad view before them, George, shutting his eyes very tight, turned his head from side to side, saying, "A' that ivver I can see 's mine." The heiress took him at his word, and found when too late the folly of trusting to blind love.

George was thus an impostor after a kind, but an impostor with a vast reality to fall back upon; he was not like the adventurers who used to throng the Lake districts when life was more secluded, detection more difficult, and minds more simple than now. I could fill whole pages with accounts of the strange people who have flashed every now and then into the Keswick view, some of whom are yet living, some of whom have come out from behind the cloud under which they then were hidden, and some of whom are mysteries to the present day,—riddles unsolved and apparently unsolvable. But then it must be confessed that with a great deal of simplicity there was also a great deal of suspicion in Keswick, and that caution and love of the marvellous were about equal in stature and strength. Given a certain amount and direction of divergence from the beaten path, and there were few stories too wild to be believed. I remember that we were taught to regard with intense awe a solitary gentleman who led a very secluded life,—apparently much occupied with anatomy and dissection, for the bodies, skins, and skeletons of birds and moles and mice were hanging in all directions in the trees about his house. It was reported that he had skulls and skeletons put away in cupboards within, and that his life was of the weirdest and most unholy. He never went to church, and he would not visit his neighbours; and these things together were too much for public charity to support. The poor gentleman in his black velvet skull-cap and long dressing-gown was set down as a kind of dealer in the black art, perhaps as a maniac, perhaps as a murderer; and his house and neglected grounds were approached only with shuddering and awe. He was probably a harmless studious naturalist, with a theory concerning comparative anatomy, which he was endeavouring to work out, and with no more evil in him than in one of his own mice. But Keswick superstition would not admit so slight a solution of its mystery. A few years ago we had two very odd young people, who lived, however, only for a short time among us. They took a mean little cottage at the Forge, close to the Grotto, and there they lived, hiring an old woman to "redd them oop," — that is, tidy and clean out the place occasionally. One of them was a dark young man, stouter, broader, taller than his companion, who appeared as a fair, slim, comely youth of by no means masculine appearance. Who they were no one knew. Some said they were cousins, but others that they were a runaway couple, and that the fair youth was a girl in disguise. They lived in their mean little hut for some time, and then they disappeared; and the report went about that an angry father,—a rich London banker,—had tracked them to their hiding-

place, and had carried away the comely youth,—his daughter,—in a whirlwind of wrath. No one knew anything for certain one way or the other; but they left pabulum for weeks of talk behind them. Another time a gentleman set up housekeeping with a young clergyman in a remote cure: a charming gentleman, accomplished, gay, well-educated; but he was marched away one Sunday morning by a couple of policemen, with a pair of handcuffs, leaving his host in hysterics on the parlour floor. That gentleman is a London notability now, and the cloud under which he had drifted for the moment has long since blown itself away. I do not know him, and I have never been ill-natured enough to tell the story with his name; but when I hear him spoken of I always think of that scene in the small dale parsonage, with the clergyman in hysterics, and the stranger between two policemen, and the little chapel bell calling the faithful to the prayers, which had to be delayed for so odd an adventure.

Even at this moment I believe there is an original who has made himself a habitation in a kind of cavern,—on that part of Skiddaw which belongs to Bassenthwaite,—whence he goes at times, barefooted, and with wild streaming hair, to buy such poor provisions as he needs to keep body and soul together. I have never seen him, so that I am speaking now only by report; and as I know what Keswick reports are,—the dear fussy exaggerative old place!—I should be very sorry to be obliged to "prove my words," as the people say. Then the captains who were no captains, my lord's sons who were not even my lord's valets, the married people who had been married only before the "maire of the thirteenth arondissement," the foreign noblemen of obscure antecedents, who came to take shelter among us, and give our tradespeople the advantage of an extended connection;—who shall number them? As far back as I can remember, Keswick society has been severely exercised concerning the authenticity of interlopers, but it never seemed to get wisdom by experience, and while still smarting from the sharp practice of my lord's son, fell an easy prey to the fascinations of the gallant captain, wanting temporary accommodation; believing as implicitly as ever in the security of left luggage, till it found again that clothes were brickbats, and that leather portmanteaus filled with rubbish would not cover the cost of several weeks' unstinted entertainment. These palmy days for astute adventurers are over now. The great hotels are swallowing up the smaller inns and lodging-houses, and as those great hotels are managed on strict commercial principles, excluding sentiment, gallant captains with leather portmanteaus filled with brickbats have less chance than formerly, credit being a precious commodity, dispensed with care and kept well in hand.

It is curious to hear the guides and lodging-house keepers make lament over the present state of things, and express themselves loudly in favour of the past, and talk of the good times before

hotels and cheap railway-trips were. I once heard an old guide grumble out when I asked him how the season was going, "Season! there's nae season noo for Kezuck! Ah! they were bonny days when I was a lad! We hed ra'al lords an' leddies then; noo, they're nobbut odds an' ends, as a body mud say,—Manchester folk, here a day an' gane the morrow, an' spendin' nowt to crack on at a'!"

And this is true. Formerly we had grand folk, who came and stayed for weeks at a stretch, the journey being a feat making necessary due rest; and the country was then considered beautiful enough for long days of loving study. Now we have men who "do the lakes in a day or so,"—men who think that they have seen and know and got to the heart of all when they have looked at winding Windermere from the windows of Rigg's Hotel, sauntered past Elleray, where Professor Wilson lived, and said, "Ah! fine tree that!" at the big sycamore shadowing the house;—maundered up the steps of Rydal Mount, and scampered up the pathway to the graceful, timid, and undoubtedly artificial-looking Rydal Falls;—when they have hurried by gloomy Helvellyn, taken a row on Derwentwater, and looked approvingly into the purple gorge of Borrowdale on the one side, and at the great green bulk of Skiddaw on the other, from St. Herbert's Island;—panted up wild Kirkstone Pass, and steamed down the Ullswater in the boat, and then back again to Liverpool or Manchester, or perhaps London, having accomplished their design, and "done" the lakes. This is the kind of tourist now-a-days, with flocks of a poorer kind still, flooding one special place for the day, when the railway authorities inaugurate cheap trains as an inducement.

We used to have large parties of collegians, too, for the summer vacation, on whom depended, in a great measure, the success of the season. And there is a chapter yet to be written about them,—odd enough to read if it ever were written. Sometimes they were quiet reading-men, given to boating for pastime and mountain-climbing for exercise,—men who gave no offence to men or morals and who lived like Christian gentlemen. And sometimes they were young savages of ultra fast ways,—called "wild" then,—who outraged every rule of conventional propriety and moral decency at will. These were the men who used to throw out red-hot pennies for the street boys to scramble for on a Sunday morning, just as all the douce church folk were streaming in from morning service,—men who used to relieve each other through the night in playing on the French horn, or braying through a cow's horn, when they wished to annoy a neighbour or too stiff a landlady,—men who used to walk about in low-crowned hats, sit about with blackened cutty-pipes, and in striped jersies and ungraceful "wrap-rascals," as a kind of defiance to the good breeding of the place,—men who hung in effigy those of the inhabitants who interfered with their ways,—throwing the effigies thus hung down the garden steps of the supposed originals,—and who were brought in bills

of thirty pounds and upwards as "damages" in the lodgings they inhabited,—men who left the place very much the worse for their visit, and who brought disgrace upon the name of "collegian" for years after. But the lodging-house keepers and the pretty girls, rising sixteen, regretted them, and when the fashion of the lakes died out at the universities there was bitter lamentation and woe throughout the vales. The towns used to ring with tales of the wild doings of this faster sort. No doubt they kept the place alive with a vengeance,—as they used to boast; but, on the whole, the money they spent, we should say, was money very dearly bought by the Keswick people. Sometimes the tutors of the real reading parties used to bring introductions to some of the gentry, and then certain of the "collegians" were admitted into the Keswick drawing-rooms, to the great enlivenment of the picnics and evening parties, and the walks home in the summer moonlight,—though also to some heart-aches in the future, when youthful promises were all forgotten, and flirtations, deep on one side and shallow on the other, had left only the bitter flavour of enduring disappointment. They made, however, a pleasant break in the monotony of the society. But the young men of the place, the aboriginal Lotharios, so to speak, were not quite so highly delighted with the new-comers as were the girls; and I remember some wild chapters of jealousy that seemed very formidable at the time, though they make one laugh now at their young absurdity. I wonder if the respectable married men, now of middle age and upwards, fathers of families, with bald heads and extensive waistcoats, remember all those pleasant little moments, to the memory of some of us like charming pastoral poems, innocent, unstained, and happy,—when girlish feet stumbled among the sharp rocks of Lowdore, and had to be steadied by stronger arms,—when the clouds came down on the steep shoulder of old Skiddaw, and the youth and maiden standing hand in hand in the mist, lost to all but the pleasure of being together and alone, could not see a foot's pace before them,—when the "white horses" leaped up against the quivering mist and splashed the bending sail, as the wind, suddenly rising, struck the boat so smart a shock that it seemed to be almost a miracle when she righted herself with a plunge and did not cant over in the middle of the lake,—when tender words were whispered under the elms by the Crossings Bridge, and pleasant dreams were indulged in with the sailors who never returned,—and the Cambridge men, who passed into space with the ending of the vacation,—and the young clergymen, who got translated from curacies to livings, but did not come back for the fulfilment of the promise they had half claimed? Or do men forget all these things, and only women keep the memory of them, as they keep withered nosegays—and regrets?

Perhaps because of the humidity of the climate, perhaps because of the confined air among the narrow vales, or because the food of the

country includes too little butcher's meat, or because the clannish habits of the people lead to inter-marriages and consequent impoverishment of blood,—whatever the physical cause may be I do not know,—but certain is it that we have more than our share of scrofula and imbecility among the poorer classes. I remember very little acute mania; but idiotcy, as well as consumption, malformations, and bone diseases, not pleasant to talk of, as common enough. Sometimes the poor creatures are merely moping moving animals, without a ray of reason to guide them,—perhaps quite harmless, perhaps mischievous at certain seasons, and at no time agreeable wayfarers to meet with in the lonely lanes; and perhaps they are able to earn a penny here and there by doing such "darracks" as driving the kye to the milking, or helping in the sheep-washing and clipping, or at hay-time, and when the oats and barley have to be cleared and stored. And sometimes they can be put to a common trade, which they learn in a mechanical kind of way, able to do just what they have been taught, and no more.

There was a little withered old fellow at Keswick of this last kind,—"daft Wully" he used to be called, "Lile Wully," and "daft Lile Wully" for a difference. He was a great botanist, he used to say of himself, and knew "a't flew'rs in't gardin." So my father once showed him a white poppy, and asked him if he knew its name and colour. "Ay, sure!" said Willy, with his head on one side, and that simple childlike smile of his which was almost pathetic for its innocent truthfulness and unconsciousness of evil. "Ken't? yis, yis! I ken't weel enough: as red as spinks an' graws in't gardin!" Poor Willy had once some dirty work to do at the Vicarage; it was the cleaning out of a drain which had got stopped up at one rather deeply cut point. Into the accumulation plunged Willy, nearly up to his neck, and could extricate himself only with great difficulty. Then running about the garden he sobbed and screamed, "I'se scomfished, bairns! I'se scomfished and bet! Lile Willy's scomfished and bet for ivver an' a'!" The poor little fellow had a kind of mania for suicide, and often tried to kill himself. He was once picked out of a water-butt where he had stuck himself head downward; and once he was found standing in a pool, shoulder high, crying bitterly and saying, "I'se deeing! nae doubt but I'se deeing noo, an' nane on ye sall lift me oot!" He was by no means a sober man, for a little went a great way with him; and when the few poor wits he had were upset by drink, he used to give his friends no end of trouble by this propensity for suicide. I believe he accomplished his purpose at last, poor old fellow, and drowned himself one day when no one was by to help him.

Once when we were driving over to Caldbeck, and had left the high road for an exploration through a by-lane, we came upon a lonely cottage in the midst of a desolate waste,—the only human habitation to be seen anywhere. As we had lost our way by this

time, we stopped at the cottage to inquire how we could best strike across Uldale Moor, and so fall into the high road for Caldbeck. I shall never forget that place, and what we found there! Two idiot children were sitting blank and silent by the midden-stead at the door. In the squalid hut sat an idiot woman with a doll-like baby in her arms, and at the other side of the hearth, his head buried in his hands, was a gaunt wild-eyed man, with a child at his feet, lolling out its tongue and slowly moving its head from side to side. Mother and four children were all imbecile, and the father looked as if he was going distraught with the horror and misery of his life. He had married a half-idiotic girl, and the lonely life on that desolate waste, poverty, and child-bearing, had made the half-idiotcy complete;—but she still went on having children, and bringing a generation of idiots into the world.

Then there was the poor diseased cripple, Dan of Portingscale, who had but one passion and one occupation,—his boat. At all times and in all weathers he was for ever hammering at his boat. It was wife, and child, and friend to him, for he had an unlovely temper for the most part, and was easily offended, extremely passionate, and great in cursing,—so was shunned by many, though sometimes teased and irritated by others. Little he cared for human intercourse so long as he had his bonny boat to hammer at, and the Portingscale cockatoo to talk to, with granny to give him his meat in due season, and a copper every now and then tossed to him to spend as he would. He was a mass of disease, and the wonder was that he was able to live at all, and that he had not long ago sunk to rest beneath the heavy burden of his infirmities. And there was idiot Nannie, of Little Crosthwaite, of whom the tradition went that she was frightened into imbecility when a lile lass by a sweep coming down the chimney into the room where she was, and thinking that it was the old gentleman himself in person come to take her away before her time. But I believe the tradition was a myth, and that Crosthwaite Nannie was just one of the born imbeciles like the rest. And there was daft old Nannie, the tramp, who used to wander about the country in her restless flighty way, unable to settle long anywhere, though always turning up after a time, smiling, curtseying, talkative, and restless as ever. No one knew where she went nor how she lived, but she used to call it "coming home" when she fluttered in at the back door at the Vicarage, sure of finding there meat and lodging as long as she chose. I can just remember the day when she made her first appearance, naked save for a tattered cotton gown that hung in "unwomanly rags" about her. I can remember the scouring through the house and the search in the wardrobes of the elder sisters that took place, and how poor daft Nannie was clothed in decent fashion, and given a good bed in a dry room,—in what with rich folks would have been the groom's chamber over the harness room.

She came "back an' forrard" for some years, and my dear father was always a steady friend to the poor flighty tramp; but at last she disappeared finally, and we never saw her again. I have often wondered what became of her!—whether she was lost in a winter snowstorm, as she was crossing some lonely mountain range, or whether God took her poor dazed soul from darkness into light as she laid down beneath the summer stars, hungered and weary, and alone with danger and death. There is many a life lost among our mountain sides and wastes, many a clever cragsman's, and many a fleet mountain woman's; and poor daft Nannie may have wandered away in her foolish fond security to where eternity was waiting for her.

A queer couple, though not actually idiotic, lived at Portingscale, on the road to the lake, just at that beautiful tree-shadowed, ferny spot which skirts the Derwent Bank grounds, and which has always seemed to me one of the most lovely and picturesque bits in the country. They were quite old people, without chick or child between them; and they quarrelled, as their betters sometimes quarrel, without ceasing. Indeed, some said they fought; but as they were both very old and very feeble they would not have done each other much harm even if they did come to blows. One day in the midst of a noisy "fratch," old Nancy fell in a fit on the floor, and out tottered her husband Jonah, shrieking at the top of his shrill old voice, "Neiburs! come in! fetch 't priest! come in! t'ane on us is deed!" He was not quite certain which it was that had gone; all he knew in his confusion being that one must be dead from the sudden ceasing of strife.

We had a local poet and artist quite equal to the petty laureates whose rhymes and oddities have attracted some public attention of late. He used to write out his doggrel on broad sheets of foolscap, and enframe his verses in borders of the queerest scrolls and figures imaginable, done in pen and ink. Of course it all meant money; and when Abel came at Christmas time with his poems illustrated by something like New Zealand figure-heads, he came for some amount of filthy lucre in exchange for his artistic gifts. A dear young brother of ours was drowned at Keswick when out bathing in the river; and Abel made a poem on the occasion, of which he was very proud. He cost my father not a little before all was done; for Abel seemed to think he had established a claim for life on a purse only too ready to acknowledge such claims, and went about telling every one how he had made verses on the poor boy, and what he had got for his reward. I do not remember what his lines were like, but there was an elaborate comparison between the drowned boy and a broken lily, which doubtless to the poet of Under Skiddaw seemed as fine as anything that Milton ever wrote or Skakspeare imaged. And it was an accident tragic enough to stir the heart of the coldest and the brain of the deadest, when the young creature was found lying with placid upturned face among the reeds and water-plants of the rapid Derwent,—

when life, with all its promise and delight, was closed to him for ever before fully entered on or known. But Abel, though unique in his own way, was by no means unique in kind, dale-bred literati not being so rare as might be imagined, judging from the homely ways and rude exterior of our "Worthies." I never knew of a native peasant woman who did anything in the intellectual way, but I could speak of more than one man, self-taught, who has done really good work. Old Jonathan Otley, the Keswick geologist and guide, was a man of this sort; and both Dalton and Watson,—the one the discoverer of the "atomic theory," the other a sculptor of well-known fame,—were Cumbrians born and bred, and men of the people forbye. So, indeed, was Wordsworth. Both he and his brothers were educated at the Hawkshead Grammar School, not far from Coniston, not far from that sheet of water, the small and somewhat uninteresting Esthwaite Lake; so that the scenery he loved, and was utterly powerless to describe, and the character he knew and wrote of, with exaggerations, were familiar to him from boyhood. The most exaggerated of all was his account of that tremendous humbug, that wonderful walker of his, his Newfield priest "over yonder," in the valley of the Duddon, who scraped together one thousand pounds out of a stipend of forty pounds yearly, but who scraped it by all sorts of petty industries and small usuries, perhaps less admirable than strange. But all biographers like to make their pigmies into giants, and Wordsworth was no exception to the rule. What a pity it was that Wordsworth was so little of an artist! What he might have done for the scenery of the lake country, had he known how to describe it! Fancy Ruskin's words translated into stately verse! But his gifts did not lie in that direction, and when even he tried his hand at anything more nearly approaching description than usual, it was of the flattest and tamest kind possible. His sonnets on the Duddon might have been written in Cheapside; and his Ancient Woman on Helm Crag is as colourless as all the rest. But this is a kind of treason, so I had better lay down my pen before I commit myself further.

PHINEAS FINN.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE NEWS ABOUT MR. MILDMAY AND SIR EVERARD.

Fitzgibbon and Phineas started together from Pall Mall for Portman Square,—as both of them had promised to call on Lady Laura,—but Fitzgibbon turned in at Brooks's as they walked up St. James's Square, and Phineas went on by himself in a cab. "You should belong here," said Fitzgibbon as his friend entered the cab, and Phineas immediately began to feel that he would have done nothing till he could get into Brooks's. It might be very well to begin by talking politics at the Reform Club. Such talking had procured for him his seat at Loughshane. But that was done now, and something more than talking was wanted for any further progress. Nothing, as he told himself, of political import was managed at the Reform Club. No influence from thence was ever brought to bear upon the adjustment of places under the Government, or upon the arrangement of cabinets. It might be very well to count votes at the Reform Club; but after the votes had been counted,—had been counted successfully,—Brooks's was the place, as Phineas believed, to learn at the earliest moment what would be the exact result of the success. He must get into Brooks's, if it might be possible for him. Fitzgibbon was not exactly the man to propose him. Perhaps the Earl of Brentford would do it.

Lady Laura was at home, and with her was sitting—Mr. Kennedy. Phineas had intended to be triumphant as he entered Lady Laura's room. He was there with the express purpose of triumphing in the success of their great party, and of singing a pleasant pæan in conjunction with Lady Laura. But his trumpet was put out of tune at once when he saw Mr. Kennedy. He said hardly a word as he gave his hand to Lady Laura,—and then afterwards to Mr. Kennedy, who chose to greet him with this show of cordiality.

"I hope you are satisfied, Mr. Finn," said Lady Laura, laughing.

"Oh yes."

"And is that all? I thought to have found your joy quite irrepressible."

"A bottle of soda-water, though it is a very lively thing when opened, won't maintain its vivacity beyond a certain period, Lady Laura."

"And you have had your gas let off already?"

"Well,—yes; at any rate, the sputtering part of it. Nineteen is very well, but the question is whether we might not have had twenty-one."

"Mr. Kennedy has just been saying that not a single available vote has been missed on our side. He has just come from Brooks's, and that seems to be what they say there."

So Mr. Kennedy also was a member of Brooks's! At the Reform Club there certainly had been an idea that the number might have been swelled to twenty-one; but then, as Phineas began to understand, nothing was correctly known at the Reform Club. For an accurate appreciation of the political balances of the day, you must go to Brooks's.

"Mr. Kennedy must of course be right," said Phineas. "I don't belong to Brooks's myself. But I was only joking, Lady Laura. There is, I suppose, no doubt that Lord De Terrier is out, and that is everything."

"He has probably tendered his resignation," said Mr. Kennedy.

"That is the same thing," said Phineas, roughly.

"Not exactly," said Lady Laura. "Should there be any difficulty about Mr. Mildmay, he might, at the Queen's request, make another attempt."

"With a majority of nineteen against him!" said Phineas. "Surely Mr. Mildmay is not the only man in the country. There is the Duke, and there is Mr. Gresham,—and there is Mr. Monk." Phineas had at his tongue's end all the lesson that he had been able to learn at the Reform Club.

"I should hardly think the Duke would venture," said Mr. Kennedy.

"Nothing venture, nothing have," said Phineas. "It is all very well to say that the Duke is incompetent, but I do not know that anything very wonderful is required in the way of genius. The Duke has held his own in both Houses successfully, and he is both honest and popular. I quite agree that a Prime Minister at the present day should be commonly honest, and more than commonly popular."

"So you are all for the Duke, are you?" said Lady Laura, again smiling as she spoke to him.

"Certainly;—if we are deserted by Mr. Mildmay. Don't you think so?"

"I don't find it quite so easy to make up my mind as you do. I am inclined to think that Mr. Mildmay will form a government; and as long as there is that prospect, I need hardly commit myself to an opinion as to his probable successor." Then the objectionable Mr. Kennedy took his leave, and Phineas was left alone with Lady Laura.

"It is glorious;—is it not?" he began, as soon as he found the field to be open for himself and his own manœuvring. But he was

very young, and had not as yet learned the manner in which he might best advance his cause with such a woman as Lady Laura Standish. He was telling her too clearly that he could have no gratification in talking with her unless he could be allowed to have her all to himself. That might be very well if Lady Laura were in love with him, but would hardly be the way to reduce her to that condition.

"Mr. Finn," said she, smiling as she spoke, "I am sure that you did not mean it, but you were uncourteous to my friend Mr. Kennedy."

"Who? I? Was I? Upon my word, I didn't intend to be uncourteous."

"If I had thought you had intended it, of course I could not tell you of it. And now I take the liberty;—for it is a liberty——"

"Oh no."

"Because I feel so anxious that you should do nothing to mar your chances as a rising man."

"You are only too kind to me,—always."

"I know how clever you are, and how excellent are all your instincts; but I see that you are a little impetuous. I wonder whether you will be angry if I take upon myself the task of mentor."

"Nothing you could say would make me angry,—though you might make me very unhappy."

"I will not do that if I can help it. A mentor ought to be very old, you know, and I am infinitely older than you are."

"I should have thought it was the reverse;—indeed, I may say that I know that it is," said Phineas.

"I am not talking of years. Years have very little to do with the comparative ages of men and women. A woman at forty is quite old, whereas a man at forty is young." Phineas, remembering that he had put down Mr. Kennedy's age as forty in his own mind, frowned when he heard this, and walked about the room in displeasure. "And therefore," continued Lady Laura, "I talk to you as though I were a kind of grandmother."

"You shall be my great-grandmother if you will only be kind enough to me to say what you really think."

"You must not then be so impetuous, and you must be a little more careful to be civil to persons to whom you may not take any particular fancy. Now Mr. Kennedy is a man who may be very useful to you."

"I do not want Mr. Kennedy to be of use to me."

"That is what I call being impetuous,—being young,—being a boy. Why should not Mr. Kennedy be of use to you as well as any one else. You do not mean to conquer the world all by yourself."

"No;—but there is something mean to me in the expressed idea that I should make use of any man,—and more especially of a man whom I don't like."

"And why do you not like him, Mr. Finn?"

"Because he is one of my Dr. Fells."

"You don't like him simply because he does not talk much. That may be a good reason why you should not make of him an intimate companion,—because you like talkative people; but it should be no ground for dislike."

Phineas paused for a moment before he answered her, thinking whether or not it would be well to ask her some question which might produce from her a truth which he would not like to hear. Then he did ask it. "And do you like him?" he said.

She too paused, but only for a second. "Yes,—I think I may say that I do like him."

"No more than that?"

"Certainly no more than that;—but that I think is a great deal."

"I wonder what you would say if any one asked you whether you liked me," said Phineas, looking away from her through the window.

"Just the same;—but without the doubt, if the person who questioned me had any right to ask the question. There are not above one or two who could have such a right."

"And I was wrong, of course, to ask it about Mr. Kennedy," said Phineas, looking out into the Square.

"I did not say so."

"But I see you think it."

"You see nothing of the kind. I was quite willing to be asked the question by you, and quite willing to answer it. Mr. Kennedy is a man of great wealth."

"What can that have to do with it?"

"Wait a moment, you impetuous Irish boy, and hear me out." Phineas liked being called an impetuous Irish boy, and came close to her, sitting where he could look up into her face; and then came a smile upon his own, and he was very handsome. "I say that he is a man of great wealth," continued Lady Laura; "and as wealth gives influence, he is of great use,—politically,—to the party to which he belongs."

"Oh, politically!"

"Am I to suppose you care nothing for politics? To such men, to men who think as you think, who are to sit on the same benches with yourself, and go into the same lobby, and be seen at the same club, it is your duty to be civil both for your own sake and for that of the cause. It is for the hermits of society to indulge in personal dislikings,—for men who have never been active and never mean to be active. I had been telling Mr. Kennedy how much I thought of you,—as a good Liberal."

"And I came in and spoilt it all."

"Yes, you did. You knocked down my little house, and I must build it all up again."

"Don't trouble yourself, Lady Laura."

"I shall. It will be a great deal of trouble,—a great deal, indeed; but I shall take it. I mean you to be very intimate with Mr. Kennedy, and to shoot his grouse, and to stalk his deer, and to help to keep him in progress as a liberal member of Parliament. I am quite prepared to admit, as his friend, that he would go back without some such help."

"Oh;—I understand."

"I do not believe that you do understand at all, but I must endeavour to make you do so by degrees. If you are to be my political pupil, you must at any rate be obedient. The next time you meet Mr. Kennedy, ask him his opinion instead of telling him your own. He has been in Parliament twelve years, and he was a good deal older than you when he began." At this moment a side door was opened, and the red-haired, red-bearded man whom Phineas had seen before entered the room. He hesitated a moment, as though he were going to retreat again, and then began to pull about the books and toys which lay on one of the distant tables, as though he were in quest of some article. And he would have retreated had not Lady Laura called to him.

"Oswald," she said, "let me introduce you to Mr. Finn. Mr. Finn, I do not think you have ever met my brother, Lord Chiltern." Then the two young men bowed, and each of them muttered something. "Do not be in a hurry, Oswald. You have nothing special to take you away. Here is Mr. Finn come to tell us who are all the possible new Prime Ministers. He is uncivil enough not to have named papa."

"My father is out of the question," said Lord Chiltern.

"Of course he is," said Lady Laura; "but I may be allowed my little joke."

"I suppose he will at any rate be in the Cabinet," said Phineas.

"I know nothing whatever about politics," said Lord Chiltern.

"I wish you did," said his sister,—"with all my heart."

"I never did,—and I never shall, for all your wishing. It's the meanest trade going I think, and I'm sure it's the most dishonest. They talk of legs on the turf, and of course there are legs; but what are they to the legs in the House. I don't know whether you are in Parliament, Mr. Finn."

"Yes, I am; but do not mind me."

"I beg your pardon. Of course there are honest men there, and no doubt you are one of them."

"He is indifferent honest,—as yet," said Lady Laura.

"I was speaking of men who go into Parliament to look after Government places," said Lord Chiltern.

"That is just what I'm doing," said Phineas. "Why should not a man serve the Crown? He has to work very hard for what he earns."

"I don't believe that the most of them work at all. However, I beg your pardon. I didn't mean you in particular."

"Mr. Finn is such a thorough politician that he will never forgive you," said Lady Laura.

"Yes, I will," said Phineas, "and I'll convert him some day. If he does come into the House, Lady Laura, I suppose he'll come on the right side?"

"I'll never go into the House, as you call it," said Lord Chiltern. "But, I'll tell you what; I shall be very happy if you'll dine with me to-morrow at Moroni's. They give you a capital little dinner at Moroni's, and they've the best Chateau Yquem in London."

"Do," said Lady Laura, in a whisper. "Oblige me."

Phineas was engaged to dine with one of the Vice-Chancellors on the day named. He had never before dined at the house of this great law luminary, whose acquaintance he had made through Mr. Low, and he had thought a great deal of the occasion. Mrs. Freemantle had sent him the invitation nearly a fortnight ago, and he understood there was to be an elaborate dinner party. He did not know it for a fact, but he was in hopes of meeting the expiring Lord Chancellor. He considered it to be his duty never to throw away such a chance. He would in all respects have preferred Mr. Freemantle's dinner in Eaton Place, dull and heavy though it might probably be, to the chance of Lord Chiltern's companions at Moroni's. Whatever might be the faults of our hero, he was not given to what is generally called dissipation by the world at large,—by which the world means self-indulgence. He cared not a brass farthing for Moroni's Chateau Yquem, nor for the wondrously studied repast which he would doubtless find prepared for him at that celebrated establishment in St. James's Street;—not a farthing as compared with the chance of meeting so great a man as Lord Moles. And Lord Chiltern's friends might probably be just the men whom he would not desire to know. But Lady Laura's request overrode everything with him. She had asked him to oblige her, and of course he would do so. Had he been going to dine with the incoming Prime Minister, he would have put off his engagement at her request. He was not quick enough to make an answer without hesitation; but after a moment's pause he said that he should be most happy to dine with Lord Chiltern at Moroni's.

"That's right; 7.30 sharp,—only I can tell you you won't meet any other members." Then the servant announced more visitors, and Lord Chiltern escaped out of the room before he was seen by the new comers. These were Mrs. Bonteen, and Laurence Fitzgibbon, and then Mr. Bonteen,—and after them Mr. Ratler, the Whip, who was in a violent hurry, and did not stay there a moment, and then Barrington Erle and young Lord James Fitz-Howard, the youngest son of the Duke of St. Bungay. In twenty or forty

minutes there was a gathering of liberal political notabilities in Lady Laura's drawing-room. There were two great pieces of news by which they were all enthralled. Mr. Mildmay would not be Prime Minister, and Sir Everard Powell was—dead. Of course nothing quite positive could be known about Mr. Mildmay. He was to be with the Queen at Windsor on the morrow at eleven o'clock, and it was improbable that he would tell his mind to any one before he told it to her Majesty. But there was no doubt that he had engaged "the Duke,"—so he was called by Lord James,—to go down to Windsor with him, that he might be in readiness if wanted. "I have learned that at home," said Lord James, who had just heard the news from his sister, who had heard it from the Duchess. Lord James was delighted with the importance given to him by his father's coming journey. From this, and from other equally well-known circumstances, it was surmised that Mr. Mildmay would decline the task proposed to him. This, nevertheless, was only a surmise,—whereas the fact with reference to Sir Everard was fully substantiated. The gout had flown to his stomach, and he was dead. "By —— yes; as dead as a herring," said Mr. Ratler, who at that moment, however, was not within hearing of either of the ladies present. And then he rubbed his hands, and looked as though he were delighted. And he was delighted,—not because his old friend Sir Everard was dead, but by the excitement of the tragedy. "Having done so good a deed in his last moments," said Laurence Fitzgibbon, "we may take it for granted that he will go straight to heaven." "I hope there will be no crowner's quest, Ratler," said Mr. Bonteen; "if there is I don't know how you'll get out of it." "I don't see anything in it so horrible," said Mr. Ratler. "If a fellow dies leading his regiment we don't think anything of it. Sir Everard's vote was of more service to his country than anything that a colonel or a captain can do." But nevertheless I think that Mr. Ratler was somewhat in dread of future newspaper paragraphs, should it be found necessary to summon a coroner's inquest to sit upon poor Sir Everard.

While this was going on Lady Laura took Phineas apart for a moment. "I am so much obliged to you; I am indeed," she said.

"What nonsense."

"Never mind whether it's nonsense or not;—but I am. I can't explain it all now, but I do so want you to know my brother. You may be of the greatest service to him,—of the very greatest. He is not half so bad as people say he is. In many ways he is very good,—very good. And he is very clever.

"At any rate I will think and believe no ill of him."

"Just so;—do not believe evil of him,—not more evil than you see. I am so anxious,—so very anxious to try to put him on his legs, and I find it so difficult to get any connecting link with him. Papa will not speak with him,—because of money."

"But he is friends with you."

"Yes; I think he loves me. I saw how distasteful it was to you to go to him;—and probably you were engaged?"

"One can always get off those sort of things if there is an object."

"Yes;—just so. And the object was to oblige me;—was it not?"

"Of course it was. But I must go now. We are to hear Daubeny's statement at four, and I would not miss it for worlds."

"I wonder whether you would go abroad with my brother in the autumn? But I have no right to think of such a thing;—have I? At any rate I will not think of it yet. Good-bye,—I shall see you perhaps on Sunday if you are in town."

Phineas walked down to Westminster with his mind very full of Lady Laura and Lord Chiltern. What did she mean by her affectionate manner to himself, and what did she mean by the continual praises which she lavished upon Mr. Kennedy? Of whom was she thinking most, of Mr. Kennedy, or of him? She had called herself his mentor. Was the description of her feelings towards himself, as conveyed in that name, of a kind to be gratifying to him? No;—he thought not. But then might it not be within his power to change the nature of those feelings? She was not in love with him at present. He could not make any boast to himself on that head. But it might be within his power to compel her to love him. The female mentor might be softened. That she could not love Mr. Kennedy, he thought that he was quite sure. There was nothing like love in her manner to Mr. Kennedy. As to Lord Chiltern, Phineas would do whatever might be in his power. All that he really knew of Lord Chiltern was that he had gambled and that he had drunk.

CHAPTER IX.

THE NEW GOVERNMENT.

In the House of Lords that night, and in the House of Commons, the outgoing Ministers made their explanations. As our business at the present moment is with the Commons, we will confine ourselves to their chamber, and will do so the more willingly because the upshot of what was said in the two places was the same. The outgoing Ministers were very grave, very self-laudatory, and very courteous. In regard to courtesy it may be declared that no stranger to the ways of the place could have understood how such soft words could be spoken by Mr. Daubeny, beaten, so quickly after the very sharp words which he had uttered when he only expected to be beaten. He announced to his fellow-commoners that his right honourable friend and colleague Lord De Terrier had thought it right to retire from the Treasury. Lord De Terrier, in constitutional obedience to the vote of the Lower House, had resigned, and the Queen had been graciously

pleased to accept Lord De Terrier's resignation. Mr. Daubeny could only further inform the House that her Majesty had signified her pleasure that Mr. Mildmay should wait upon her to-morrow at eleven o'clock. Mr. Mildmay,—so Mr. Daubeny understood,—would be with her Majesty to-morrow at that hour. Lord de Terrier had found it to be his duty to recommend her Majesty to send for Mr. Mildmay. Such was the real import of Mr. Daubeny's speech. That further portion of it in which he explained with blandest, most beneficent, honey-flowing words that his party would have done everything that the country could require of any party, had the House allowed it to remain on the Treasury benches for a month or two,—and explained also that his party would never recriminate, would never return evil for evil, would in no wise copy the factious opposition of their adversaries; that his party would now, as it ever had done, carry itself with the meekness of the dove and the wisdom of the serpent,—all this, I say, was so generally felt by gentlemen on both sides of the House to be "leather and prunella," that very little attention was paid to it. The great point was that Lord De Terrier had resigned and that Mr. Mildmay had been summoned to Windsor.

The Queen had sent for Mr. Mildmay in compliance with advice given to her by Lord De Terrier. And yet Lord De Terrier and his first lieutenant had used all the most practised efforts of their eloquence for the last three days in endeavouring to make their countrymen believe that no more unfitting Minister than Mr. Mildmay ever attempted to hold the reins of office! Nothing had been too bad for them to say of Mr. Mildmay,—and yet, in the very first moment in which they found themselves unable to carry on the Government themselves, they advised the Queen to send for that most incompetent and baneful statesman! We who are conversant with our own methods of politics, see nothing odd in this, because we are used to it; but surely in the eyes of strangers our practice must be very singular. There is nothing like it in any other country,—nothing as yet. Nowhere else is there the same good-humoured, affectionate, prize-fighting ferocity in politics. The leaders of our two great parties are to each other exactly as are the two champions of the ring who knock each other about for the belt and for five hundred pounds a-side once in every two years. How they fly at each other, striking as though each blow should carry death if it were but possible! And yet there is no one whom the Birmingham Bantam respects so highly as he does Bill Burns the Brighton Bully, or with whom he has so much delight in discussing the merits of a pot of half-and-half. And so it was with Mr. Daubeny and Mr. Mildmay. In private life Mr. Daubeny almost adulated his elder rival,—and Mr. Mildmay never omitted an opportunity of taking Mr. Daubeny warmly by the hand. It is not so in the United States. There the same political enmity exists, but the political enmity produces private hatred. The leaders of parties

there really mean what they say when they abuse each other, and are in earnest when they talk as though they were about to tear each other limb from limb. I doubt whether Mr. Daubeny would have injured a hair of Mr. Mildmay's venerable head, even for an assurance of six continued months in office.

When Mr. Daubeny had completed his statement, Mr. Mildmay simply told the House that he had received and would obey her Majesty's commands. The House would of course understand that he by no means meant to aver that the Queen would even commission him to form a Ministry. But if he took no such command from her Majesty it would become his duty to recommend her Majesty to impose the task upon some other person. Then everything was said that had to be said, and members returned to their clubs. A certain damp was thrown over the joy of some excitable Liberals by tidings which reached the House during Mr. Daubeny's speech. Sir Everard Powell was no more dead than was Mr. Daubeny himself. Now it is very unpleasant to find that your news is untrue, when you have been at great pains to disseminate it. "Oh, but he is dead," said Mr. Ratler. "Lady Powell assured me half an hour ago," said Mr. Ratler's opponent, "that he was at that moment a great deal better than he has been for the last three months. The journey down to the House did him a world of good." "Then we'll have him down for every division," said Mr. Ratler.

The political portion of London was in a ferment for the next five days. On the Sunday morning it was known that Mr. Mildmay had declined to put himself at the head of a liberal Government. He and the Duke of St. Bungay, and Mr. Plantagenet Palliser, had been in conference so often, and so long, that it may almost be said they lived together in conference. Then Mr. Gresham had been with Mr. Mildmay,—and Mr. Monk also. At the clubs it was said by many that Mr. Monk had been with Mr. Mildmay; but it was also said very vehemently by others that no such interview had taken place. Mr. Monk was a Radical, much admired by the people, sitting in Parliament for that most Radical of all constituencies, the Pottery Hamlets, who had never as yet been in power. It was the great question of the day whether Mr. Mildmay would or would not ask Mr. Monk to join him; and it was said by those who habitually think at every period of change that the time has now come in which the difficulties to forming a government will at last be found to be insuperable, that Mr. Mildmay could not succeed either with Mr. Monk or without him. There were at the present moment two sections of these gentlemen,—the section which declared that Mr. Mildmay had sent for Mr. Monk, and the section which declared that he had not. But there were others, who perhaps knew better what they were saying, by whom it was asserted that the whole difficulty lay with Mr. Gresham. Mr. Graham was willing to serve

with Mr. Mildmay,—with certain stipulations as to the special seat in the Cabinet which he himself was to occupy, and as to the introduction of certain friends of his own; but,—so said these gentlemen who were supposed really to understand the matter,—Mr. Gresham was not willing to serve with the Duke and with Mr. Palliser. Now, everybody who knew anything knew that the Duke and Mr. Palliser were indispensable to Mr. Mildmay. And a liberal Government, with Mr. Gresham in the opposition, could not live half through a session! All Sunday and Monday these things were discussed; and on the Monday Lord De Terrier absolutely stated to the Upper House that he had received her Majesty's commands to form another government. Mr. Daubeny, in half a dozen most modest words,—in words hardly audible, and most unlike himself,—made his statement in the Lower House to the same effect. Then Mr. Ratler, and Mr. Bonteen, and Mr. Barrington Erle, and Mr. Laurence Fitzgibbon aroused themselves and swore that such things could not be. Should the prey which they had won for themselves, the spoil of their bows and arrows, be snatched from out of their very mouths by treachery. Lord De Terrier and Mr. Daubeny could not venture even to make another attempt unless they did so in combination with Mr. Gresham. Such a combination, said Mr. Barrington Erle, would be disgraceful to both parties, but would prove Mr. Gresham to be as false as Satan himself. Early on the Tuesday morning, when it was known that Mr. Gresham had been at Lord De Terrier's house, Barrington Erle was free to confess that he had always been afraid of Mr. Gresham. "I have felt for years," said he, "that if anybody could break up the party it would be Mr. Gresham."

On that Tuesday morning Mr. Gresham certainly was with Lord De Terrier, but nothing came of it. Mr. Gresham was either not enough like Satan for the occasion, or else he was too closely like him. Lord De Terrier did not bid high enough, or else Mr. Gresham did not like biddings from that quarter. Nothing then came from this attempt, and on the Tuesday afternoon the Queen again sent for Mr. Mildmay. On the Wednesday morning the gentlemen who thought that the insuperable difficulties had at length arrived, began to wear their longest faces, and to be triumphant with melancholy forebodings. Now at last there was a dead lock. Nobody could form a government. It was asserted that Mr. Mildmay had fallen at her Majesty's feet dissolved in tears, and had implored to be relieved from further responsibility. It was well known to many at the clubs that the Queen had on that morning telegraphed to Germany for advice. There were men so gloomy as to declare that the Queen must throw herself into the arms of Mr. Monk, unless Mr. Mildmay would consent to rise from his knees and once more buckle on his ancient armour. "Even that would be better than Gresham," said Barrington Erle, in his anger. "I'll tell you what it is," said Ratler, "we shall have

Gresham and Monk together, and you and I shall have to do their biddings." Mr. Barrington Erle's reply to that suggestion I may not dare to insert in these pages.

On the Wednesday night, however, it was known that everything had been arranged, and before the Houses met on the Thursday every place had been bestowed, either in reality or in imagination. The *Times*, in its second edition on the Thursday, gave a list of the Cabinet, in which four places out of fourteen were rightly filled. On the Friday it named ten places aright, and indicated the law officers, with only one mistake in reference to Ireland; and on the Saturday it gave a list of the Under Secretaries of State, and Secretaries and Vice-Presidents generally, with wonderful correctness as to the individuals, though the offices were a little jumbled. The Government was at last formed in a manner which everybody had seen to be the only possible way in which a government could be formed. Nobody was surprised, and the week's work was regarded as though the regular routine of government making had simply been followed. Mr. Mildmay was Prime Minister; Mr. Gresham was at the Foreign Office; Mr. Monk was at the Board of Trade; the Duke was President of the Council; the Earl of Brentford was Privy Seal; and Mr. Palliser was Chancellor of the Exchequer. Barrington Erle made a step up in the world, and went to the Admiralty as Secretary; Mr. Bonteen was sent again to the Admiralty; and Laurence Fitzgibbon became a junior Lord of the Treasury. Mr. Ratler was, of course, installed as Patronage Secretary to the same Board. Mr. Ratler was perhaps the only man in the party as to whose destination there could not possibly be a doubt. Mr. Ratler had really qualified himself for a position in such a way as to make all men feel that he would, as a matter of course, be called upon to fill it. I do not know whether as much could be said on behalf of any other man in the new Government.

During all this excitement, and through all these movements, Phineas Finn felt himself to be left more and more out in the cold. He had not been such a fool as to suppose that any office would be offered to him. He had never hinted at such a thing to his one dearly intimate friend, Lady Laura. He had not hitherto opened his mouth in Parliament. Indeed, when the new Government was formed he had not been sitting for above a fortnight. Of course nothing could be done for him as yet. But, nevertheless, he felt himself to be out in the cold. The very men who had discussed with him the question of the division,—who had discussed it with him because his vote was then as good as that of any other member,—did not care to talk to him about the distribution of places. He, at any rate, could not be one of them. He, at any rate, could not be a rival. He could neither mar nor assist. He could not be either a successful or a disappointed sympathiser,—because he could not himself be a candidate. The affair which perhaps disgusted him more than anything

else was the offer of an office,—not in the Cabinet, indeed, but one supposed to confer high dignity,—to Mr. Kennedy. Mr. Kennedy refused the offer, and this somewhat lessened Finn's disgust, but the offer itself made him unhappy.

"I suppose it was made simply because of his money," he said to Fitzgibbon.

"I don't believe that," said Fitzgibbon. "People seem to think that he has got a head on his shoulders, though he has got no tongue in it. I wonder at his refusing it because of the Right Honourable."

"I am so glad that Mr. Kennedy refused," said Lady Laura to him.

"And why? He would have been the Right Hon. Robert Kennedy for ever and ever." Phineas when he said this did not as yet know exactly how it would have come to pass that such honour,—the honour of that enduring prefix to his name,—would have come in the way of Mr. Kennedy had Mr. Kennedy accepted the office in question; but he was very quick to learn all these things, and, in the meantime, he rarely made any mistake about them.

"What would that have been to him,—with his wealth?" said Lady Laura. "He has a position of his own and need not care for such things. There are men who should not attempt what is called independence in Parliament. By doing so they simply decline to make themselves useful. But there are a few whose special walk in life it is to be independent, and, as it were, unmoved by parties."

"Great Akinetoses! You know Orion," said Phineas.

"Mr. Kennedy is not an Akinetos." said Lady Laura.

"He holds a very proud position," said Phineas, ironically.

"A very proud position indeed," said Lady Laura, in sober earnest.

The dinner at Moroni's had been eaten, and Phineas had given an account of the entertainment to Lord Chiltern's sister. There had been only two other guests, and both of them had been men on the turf. "I was the first there," said Phineas, "and he surprised me ever so much by telling me that you had spoken to him of me before."

"Yes; I did so. I wish him to know you. I want him to know some men who think of something besides horses. He is very well educated, you know, and would certainly have taken honours if he had not quarrelled with the people at Christ Church."

"Did he take a degree?"

"No;—they sent him down. It is best always to have the truth among friends. Of course you will hear it some day. They expelled him, because he was drunk." Then Lady Laura burst out into tears, and Phineas sat near her, and consoled her, and swore that if in any way he could befriend her brother he would do so.

Mr. Fitzgibbon at this time claimed a promise which he said that Phineas had made to him,—that Phineas would go over with him to Mayo to assist at his re-election. And Phineas did go. The whole affair occupied but a week, and was chiefly memorable as being the

means of cementing the friendship which existed between the two Irish members.

"A thousand a year!" said Laurence Fitzgibbon, speaking of the salary of his office. "It isn't much; is it? And every fellow to whom I owe a shilling will be down upon me. If I had studied my own comfort, I should have done the same as Kennedy."

CHAPTER X.

VIOLET EFFINGHAM.

It was now the middle of May, and a month had elapsed since the terrible difficulty about the Queen's Government had been solved. A month had elapsed, and things had shaken themselves into their places with more of ease and apparent fitness than men had given them credit for possessing. Mr. Mildmay, Mr. Gresham, and Mr. Monk were the best friends in the world, swearing by each other in their own house, and supported in the other by as gallant a phalanx of Whig peers as ever were got together to fight against the instincts of their own order in compliance with the instincts of those below them. Lady Laura's father was in the Cabinet, to Lady Laura's infinite delight. It was her ambition to be brought as near to political action as was possible for a woman without surrendering any of the privileges of feminine inaction. That women should even wish to have votes at parliamentary elections was to her abominable, and the cause of the Rights of Women generally was odious to her; but, nevertheless, for herself, she delighted in hoping that she too might be useful,—in thinking that she too was perhaps, in some degree, politically powerful; and she had received considerable increase to such hopes when her father accepted the Privy Seal. The Earl himself was not an ambitious man, and, but for his daughter, would have severed himself altogether from political life before this time. He was an unhappy man;—being an obstinate man, and having in his obstinacy quarrelled with his only son. In his unhappiness he would have kept himself alone, living in the country, brooding over his wretchedness, were it not for his daughter. On her behalf, and in obedience to her requirements, he came yearly up to London, and, perhaps in compliance with her persuasion, had taken some part in the debates of the House of Lords. It is easy for a peer to be a statesman, if the trouble of the life be not too much for him. Lord Brentford was now a statesman, if a seat in the Cabinet be proof of statesmanship.

At this time, in May, there was staying with Lady Laura in Portman Square a very dear friend of hers, by name Violet Effingham. Violet Effingham was an orphan, an heiress, and a beauty; with a terrible aunt, one Lady Baldock, who was supposed to be the dragon who had Violet, as a captive maiden, in charge. But as Miss [illegible]

ham was of age, and was mistress of her own fortune, Lady Baldock was, in truth, not omnipotent as a dragon should be. The dragon, at any rate, was not now staying in Portman Square, and the captivity of the maiden was therefore not severe at the present moment. Violet Effingham was very pretty, but could hardly be said to be beautiful. She was small, with light crispy hair, which seemed to be ever on the flutter round her brows, and which yet was never a hair astray. She had sweet, soft grey eyes, which never looked at you long, hardly for a moment,—but which yet, in that half moment, nearly killed you by the power of their sweetness. Her cheek was the softest thing in nature, and the colour of it, when its colour was fixed enough to be told, was a shade of pink so faint and creamy that you would hardly dare to call it by its name. Her mouth was perfect, not small enough to give that expression of silliness which is so common, but almost divine, with the temptation of its full, rich, ruby lips. Her teeth, which she but seldom showed, were very even and very white, and there rested on her chin the dearest dimple that ever acted as a loadstar to men's eyes. The fault of her face, if it had a fault, was in her nose,—which was a little too sharp, and perhaps too small. A woman who wanted to depreciate Violet Effingham had once called her a pug-nosed puppet; but I, as her chronicler, deny that she was pug-nosed,—and all the world who knew her soon came to understand that she was no puppet. In figure she was small, but not so small as she looked to be. Her feet and hands were delicately fine, and there was a softness about her whole person, an apparent compressibility, which seemed to indicate that she might go into very small compass. Into what compass and how compressed, there were very many men who held very different opinions. Violet Effingham was certainly no puppet. She was great at dancing,—as perhaps might be a puppet,—but she was great also at archery, great at skating,—and great, too, at hunting. With reference to that last accomplishment, she and Lady Baldock had had more than one terrible tussle, not always with advantage to the dragon. "My dear aunt," she had said once during the last winter, "I am going to the meet with George,"—George was her cousin, Lord Baldock, and was the dragon's son,—"and there, let there be an end of it." "And you promise me that you will not go further," said the dragon. "I will promise nothing to-day to any man or to any woman," said Violet. What was to be said to a young lady who spoke in this way, and who had become of age only a fortnight since? She rode that day the famous run from Bagnall's Gorse to Foulsham Common, and was in at the death.

Violet Effingham was now sitting in conference with her friend Lady Laura, and they were discussing matters of high import,—of very high import, indeed,—to the interests of both of them. "I do not ask you to accept him," said Lady Laura.

"That is lucky," said the other, "as he has never asked me."

"He has done much the same. You know that he loves you."

"I know,—or fancy that I know,—that so many men love me! But, after all, what sort of love is it? It is just as when you and I, when we see something nice in a shop, call it a dear duck of a thing, and tell somebody to go and buy it, let the price be ever so extravagant. I know my own position, Laura. I'm a dear duck of a thing."

"You are a very dear thing to Oswald."

"But you, Laura, will some day inspire a grand pasison,—or I daresay have already, for you are a great deal too close to tell;—and then there will be cutting of throats, and a mighty hubbub, and a real tragedy. I shall never go beyond genteel comedy,—unless I run away with somebody beneath me, or do something awfully improper."

"Don't do that, dear."

"I should like to, because of my aunt. I should indeed. If it were possible, without compromising myself, I should like her to be told some morning that I had gone off with the curate."

"How can you be so wicked, Violet!"

"It would serve her right,—and her countenance would be so awfully comic. Mind, if it is ever to come off, I must be there to see it. I know what she would say as well as possible. She would turn to poor Gussy. 'Augusta,' she would say, 'I always expected it. I always did.' Then I should come out and curtsey to her, and say so prettily, 'Dear aunt, it was only our little joke.' That's my line. But for you,—you, if you planned it, would go off to-morrow with Lucifer himself if you liked him."

"But failing Lucifer, I shall probably be very humdrum."

"You don't mean that there is anything settled, Laura?"

"There is nothing settled,—or any beginning of anything that ever can be settled. But I am not talking about myself. He has told me that if you will accept him, he will do anything that you and I may ask him."

"Yes;—he will promise."

"Did you ever know him to break his word?"

"I know nothing about him, my dear. How should I?"

"Do not pretend to be ignorant and meek, Violet. You do know him,—much better than most girls know the men they marry. You have known him, more or less intimately, all your life."

"But am I bound to marry him because of that accident?"

"No; you are not bound to marry him,—unless you love him."

"I do not love him," said Violet, with slow, emphatic words, and a little forward motion of her face, as though she were specially eager to convince her friend that she was quite in earnest in what she said.

"I fancy, Violet, that you are nearer to loving him than any other man."

"I am not at all near to loving any man. I doubt whether I

"I wish you would be in earnest with me."

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ever shall be. It does not seem to me to be possible to myself to be what girls call in love. I can like a man. I do like, perhaps, half a dozen. I like them so much that if I go to a house or to a party it is quite a matter of importance to me whether this man or that will or will not be there. And then I suppose I flirt with them. At least Augusta tells me that my aunt says that I do. But as for caring about any one of them in the way of loving him,—wanting to marry him, and have him all to myself, and that sort of thing,—I don't know what it means."

"But you intend to be married some day," said Lady Laura.

"Certainly I do. And I don't intend to wait very much longer. I am heartily tired of Lady Baldock, and though I can generally escape among my friends, that is not sufficient. I am beginning to think that it would be pleasant to have a house of my own. A girl becomes such a Bohemian when she is always going about, and doesn't quite know where any of her things are."

Then there was silence between them for a few minutes. Violet Effingham was doubled up in a corner of a sofa, with her feet tucked under her, and her face reclining upon one of her shoulders. And as she talked she was playing with a little toy, which was constructed to take various shapes as it was flung this way or that. A bystander looking at her would have thought that the toy was much more to her than the conversation. Lady Laura was sitting upright, in a common chair, at a table not far from her companion, and was manifestly devoting herself altogether to the subject that was being discussed between them. She had taken no lounging, easy attitude, she had found no employment for her fingers, and she looked steadily at Violet as she talked,—whereas Violet was looking only at the little manikin which she tossed. And now Laura got up and came to the sofa, and sat close to her friend. Violet, though she somewhat moved one foot, so as to seem to make room for the other, still went on with her play.

"If you do marry, Violet, you must choose some one man out of the lot."

"That's quite true, my dear. I certainly can't marry them all."

"And how do you mean to make the choice?"

"I don't know. I suppose I shall toss up."

"I wish you would be in earnest with me."

"Well;—I will be in earnest. I shall take the first that comes after I have quite made up my mind. You'll think it very horrible, but that is really what I shall do. After all, a husband is very much like a house or a horse. You don't take your house because it's the best house in the world, but because just then you want a house. You go and see a house, and if it's very nasty you don't take it. But if you think it will suit pretty well, and if you are tired of looking about for houses, you do take it. That's the way one buys one's horses,—and one's husbands."

"And you have not made up your mind yet?"

"Not quite. Lady Baldock was a little more decent than usual just before I left Baddingham. When I told her that I meant to have a pair of ponies, she merely threw up her hands and grunted. She didn't gnash her teeth, and curse and swear, and declare to me that I was a child of perdition."

"What do you mean by cursing and swearing?"

"She told me once that if I bought a certain little dog, it would lead to my being everlastingly—you know what. She isn't so squeamish as I am, and said it out."

"What did you do?"

"I bought the little dog, and it bit my aunt's heel. I was very sorry then, and gave the creature to Mary Rivers. He was such a beauty! I hope the perdition has gone with him, for I don't like Mary Rivers at all. I had to give the poor beasty to somebody, and Mary Rivers happened to be there. I told her that Puck was connected with Apollyon, but she didn't mind that. Puck was worth twenty guineas, and I daresay she has sold him."

"Oswald may have an equal chance then among the other favourites?" said Lady Laura, after another pause.

"There are no favourites, and I will not say that any man may have a chance. Why do you press me about your brother in this way?"

"Because I am so anxious. Because it would save him. Because you are the only woman for whom he has ever cared, and because he loves you with all his heart; and because his father would be reconciled to him to-morrow if he heard that you and he were engaged."

"Laura, my dear——"

"Well."

"You won't be angry if I speak out?"

"Certainly not. After what I have said, you have a right to speak out."

"It seems to me that all your reasons are reasons why he should marry me;—not reasons why I should marry him."

"Is not his love for you a reason?"

"No," said Violet, pausing,—and speaking the word in the lowest possible whisper. "If he did not love me, that, if known to me, should be a reason why I should not marry him. Ten men may love me,—I don't say that any man does,——"

"He does."

"But I can't marry all the ten. And as for that business of saving him——"

"You know what I mean?"

"I don't know that I have any special mission for saving young men. I sometimes think that I shall have quite enough to do to save myself. It is strange what a propensity I feel for the wrong side of the post."

"I feel the strongest assurance that you will always keep on the right side."

"Thank you, my dear. I mean to try, but I'm quite sure that the jockey who takes me in hand ought to be very steady himself. Now, Lord Chiltern——"

"Well,—out with it. What have you to say?"

"He does not bear the best reputation in this world as a steady man. Is he altogether the sort of man that mammas of the best kind are seeking for their daughters? I like a roué myself;—and a prig who sits all night in the House, and talks about nothing but church-rates and suffrage, is to me intolerable. I prefer men who are improper, and all that sort of thing. If I were a man myself I should go in for everything I ought to leave alone. I know I should. But you see,—I'm not a man, and I must take care of myself. The wrong side of the post for a woman is so very much the wrong side. I like a fast man, but I know that I must not dare to marry the sort of man that I like."

"To be one of us then,—the very first among us;—would that be the wrong side?"

"You mean that to be Lady Chiltern in the present tense, and Lady Brentford in the future, would be promotion for Violet Effingham in the past?"

"How hard you are, Violet?"

"Fancy,—that it should come to this,—that you should call me hard, Laura. I should like to be your sister. I should like well enough to be your father's daughter. I should like well enough to be Chiltern's friend. I am his friend. Nothing that any one has ever said of him has estranged me from him. I have fought for him till I have been black in the face. Yes, I have,—with my aunt. But I am afraid to be his wife. The risk would be so great. Suppose that I did not save him, but that he brought me to shipwreck instead?"

"That could not be!"

"Could it not? I think it might be so very well. When I was a child they used to be always telling me to mind myself. It seems to me that a child and a man need not mind themselves. Let them do what they may, they can be set right again. Let them fall as they will, you can put them on their feet. But a woman has to mind herself;—and very hard work it is when she has a dragon of her own driving her ever the wrong way."

"I want to take you from the dragon."

"Yes;—and to hand me over to a griffin."

"The truth is, Violet, that you do not know Oswald. He is not a griffin."

"I did not mean to be uncomplimentary. Take any of the dangerous wild beasts you please. I merely intend to point out that he is a dangerous wild beast. I daresay he is noble-minded, and I will

call him a lion if you like it better. But even with a lion there is risk."

".Of course there will be risk. There is risk with every man,—unless you will be contented with the prig you described. Of course, there would be risk with my brother. He has been a gambler."

"They say he is one still."

"He has given it up in part, and would entirely at your instance."

"And they say other things of him, Laura."

"It is true. He has had paroxysms of evil life which have well-nigh ruined him."

"And those paroxysms are so dangerous! Is he not in debt?"

"He is,—but not deeply. Every shilling that he owes would be paid;—every shilling. Mind, I know all his circumstances, and I give you my word that every shilling should be paid. He has never lied,—and he has told me everything. His father could not leave an acre away from him if he would, and would not if he could."

"I did not ask as fearing that. I spoke only of a dangerous habit. A paroxysm of spending money is apt to make one so uncomfortable. And then——"

"Well."

"I don't know why I should make a catalogue of your brother's weaknesses."

"You mean to say that he drinks too much?"

"I do not say so. People say so. The dragon says so. And as I always find her sayings to be untrue, I suppose this is like the rest of them."

"It is untrue,—if it be said of him as a habit."

"It is another paroxysm,—just now and then."

"Do not laugh at me, Violet, when I am taking his part, or I shall be offended."

"But you see, if I am to be his wife, it is—rather important."

"Still you need not ridicule me."

"Dear Laura, you know I do not ridicule you. You know I love you for what you are doing. Would not I do the same, and fight for him down to my nails, if I had a brother."

"And therefore I want you to be Oswald's wife;—because I know that you would fight for him. It is not true that he is a—drunkard. Look at his hand, which is as steady as yours. Look at his eye. Is there a sign of it. He has been drunk, once or twice perhaps,—and has done fearful things."

"It might be that he would do fearful things to me."

"You never knew a man with a softer heart or with a finer spirit. I believe as I sit here that if he were married to-morrow, his vices would fall from him like old clothes."

"You will admit, Laura, that there will be some risk for the wife."

"Of course there will be a risk. Is there not always a risk?"

"The men in the city would call this double-dangerous, I think," said Violet. Then the door was opened, and the man of whom they were speaking entered the room.

CHAPTER XI.

LORD CHILTERN.

The reader has been told that Lord Chiltern was a red man, and that peculiarity of his personal appearance was certainly the first to strike a stranger. It imparted a certain look of ferocity to him, which was apt to make men afraid of him at first sight. Women are not actuated in the same way, and are accustomed to look deeper into men at the first sight than other men will trouble themselves to do. His beard was red, and was clipped, so as to have none of the softness of waving hair. The hair on his head also was kept short, and was very red,—and the colour of his face was red. Nevertheless he was a handsome man, with well-cut features, not tall, but very strongly built, and with a certain curl in the corner of his eyelids which gave to him a look of resolution,—which perhaps he did not possess. He was known to be a clever man, and when very young had had the reputation of being a scholar. When he was three-and-twenty grey-haired votaries of the turf declared that he would make his fortune on the race-course,—so clear-headed was he as to odds, so excellent a judge of a horse's performances, and so gifted with a memory of events. When he was five-and-twenty he had lost every shilling of a fortune of his own, had squeezed from his father more than his father ever chose to name in speaking of his affairs to any one, and was known to be in debt. But he had sacrificed himself on one or two memorable occasions in conformity with turf laws of honour, and men said of him, either that he was very honest or very chivalric,—in accordance with the special views on the subject of the man who was speaking. It was reported now that he no longer owned horses on the turf;—but this was doubted by some who could name the animals which they said that he owned, and which he ran in the name of Mr. Macnab,—said some; of Mr. Pardoe,—said others; of Mr. Chickerwick,—said a third set of informants. The fact was that Lord Chiltern at this moment had no interest of his own in any horse upon the turf.

But all the world knew that he drank. He had taken by the throat a proctor's bull-dog when he had been drunk at Oxford, had nearly strangled the man, and had been expelled. He had fallen through his violence into some terrible misfortune at Paris, had been brought before a public judge, and his name and his infamy had been made notorious in every newspaper in the two capitals. After that he had fought a ruffian at Newmarket, and had really killed him with his fists. In reference to this latter affray it had been proved that the

attack had been made on him, that he had not been to blame, and that he had not been drunk. After a prolonged investigation he had come forth from that affair without disgrace. He would have done so, at least, if he had not been heretofore disgraced. But we all know how the man well spoken of may steal a horse, while he who is of evil repute may not look over a hedge. It was asserted widely by many who were supposed to know all about everything that Lord Chiltern was in a fit of dilirium tremens when he killed the ruffian at Newmarket. The worst of that latter affair was that it produced the total estrangement which now existed between Lord Brentford and his son. Lord Brentford would not believe that his son was in that matter more sinned against than sinning. "Such things do not happen to other men's sons," he said, when Lady Laura pleaded for her brother. Lady Laura could not induce her father to see his son, but so far prevailed that no sentence of banishment was pronounced against Lord Chiltern. There was nothing to prevent the son sitting at his father's table if he so pleased. He never did so please,—but nevertheless he continued to live in the house in Portman Square; and when he met the Earl, in the hall, perhaps, or on the staircase, would simply bow to him. Then the Earl would bow again, and shuffle on,—and look very wretched, as no doubt he was. A grown-up son must be the greatest comfort a man can have,—if he be his father's best friend; but otherwise he can hardly be a comfort. As it was in this house, the son was a constant thorn in his father's side.

"What does he do when we leave London?" Lord Brentford once said to his daughter.

"He stays here, papa."

"But he hunts still?"

"Yes, he hunts,—and he has a room somewhere at an inn,—down in Northamptonshire. But he is mostly in London. They have trains on purpose."

"What a life for my son!" said the Earl. "What a life! Of course no decent person will let him into his house." Lady Laura did not know what to say to this, for in truth Lord Chiltern was not fond of staying at the houses of persons whom the Earl would have called decent.

General Effingham, the father of Violet, and Lord Brentford had been the closest and dearest of friends. They had been young men in the same regiment, and through life each had confided in the other. When the General's only son, then a youth of seventeen, was killed in one of our grand New Zealand wars, the bereaved father and the Earl had been together for a month in their sorrow. At that time Lord Chiltern's career had still been open to hope,—and the one man had contrasted his lot with the other. General Effingham lived long enough to hear the Earl declare to him that his lot was the happier of the two. Now the General was dead, and Violet, the daughter of

a second wife, was all that was left of the Effinghams. This second wife had been a Miss Plummer, a lady from the city with much money, whose sister had married Lord Baldock. Violet in this way had fallen to the care of the Baldock people, and not into the hands of her father's friends. But, as the reader will have surmised, she had ideas of her own of emancipating herself from Baldock thraldom.

Twice before that last terrible affair at Newmarket, before the quarrel between the father and the son had been complete, Lord Brentford had said a word to his daughter,—merely a word,—of his son in connection with Miss Effingham.

"If he thinks of it I shall be glad to see him on the subject. You may tell him so." That had been the first word. He had just then resolved that the affair in Paris should be regarded as condoned,—as among the things to be forgotten. "She is too good for him; but if he asks her let him tell her everything." That had been the second word, and had been spoken immediately subsequent to a payment of twelve thousand pounds made by the Earl towards the settlement of certain Doncaster accounts. Lady Laura in negotiating for the money had been very eloquent in describing some honest,—or shall we say chivalric,—sacrifice which had brought her brother into this special difficulty. Since that the Earl had declined to interest himself in his son's matrimonial affairs; and when Lady Laura had once again mentioned the matter, declaring her belief that it would be the means of saving her brother Oswald, the Earl had desired her to be silent. "Would you wish to destroy the poor child," he had said. Nevertheless Lady Laura felt sure that if she were to go to her father with a positive statement that Oswald and Violet were engaged, he would relent and would accept Violet as his daughter. As for the payment of Lord Chiltern's present debts;—she had a little scheme of her own about that.

Miss Effingham, who had been already two days in Portman Square, had not as yet seen Lord Chiltern. She knew that he lived in the house,—that is, that he slept there, and probably eat his breakfast in some apartment of his own;—but she knew also that the habits of the house would not by any means make it necessary that they should meet. Laura and her brother probably saw each other daily,—but they never went into society together, and did not know the same sets of people. When she had announced to Lady Baldock her intention of spending the first fortnight of her London season with her friend Lady Laura, Lady Baldock had as a matter of course—"jumped upon her," as Miss Effingham would herself call it.

"You are going to the house of the worst reprobate in all England," said Lady Baldock.

"What;—dear old Lord Brentford, whom papa loved so well!"

"I mean Lord Chiltern, who, only last year,—murdered a man!"

"That is not true, aunt."

"There is worse than that,—much worse. He is always—tipsy,

and always gambling, and always—— But it is quite unfit that I should speak a word more to you about such a man as Lord Chiltern. His name ought never to be mentioned."

"Then why did you mention it, aunt?"

Lady Baldock's process of jumping upon her niece,—in which I think the aunt had generally the worst of the exercise,—went on for some time, but Violet of course carried her point.

"If she marries him there will be an end of everything," said Lady Baldock to her daughter Augusta.

"She has more sense than that, mamma," said Augusta.

"I don't think she has any sense at all," said Lady Baldock;—"not in the least. I do wish my poor sister had lived;—I do indeed."

Lord Chiltern had now entered the room with Violet,—immediately upon that conversation between Violet and his sister as to the expediency of Violet becoming his wife. Indeed his entrance had interrupted the conversation before it was over. "I am so glad to see you, Miss Effingham," he said. "I came in thinking that I might find you."

"Here I am, as large as life," she said, getting up from her corner on the sofa and giving him her hand. "Laura and I have been discussing the affairs of the nation for the last two days, and have nearly brought our discussion to an end." She could not help looking, first at his eye and then at his hand, not as wanting evidence to the truth of the statement which his sister had made, but because the idea of a drunkard's eye and a drunkard's hand had been brought before her mind. Lord Chiltern's hand was like the hand of any other man, but there was something in his eye that almost frightened her. It looked as though he would not hesitate to wring his wife's neck round, if ever he should be brought to threaten to do so. And then his eye, like the rest of him, was red. No;—she did not think that she could ever bring herself to marry him. Why take a venture that was double-dangerous, when there were so many ventures open to her, apparently with very little of danger attached to them. "If it should ever be that I loved him, I would do it all the same," she said to herself.

"If I did not come and see you here, I suppose that I should never see you," said he, seating himself. "I do not often go to parties, and when I do you are not likely to be there."

"We might make our little arrangements for meeting," said she, laughing. "My aunt, Lady Baldock, is going to have an evening next week."

"The servants would be ordered to put me out of the house."

"Oh no. You can tell her that I invited you."

"I don't think that Oswald and Lady Baldock are great friends," said Lady Laura.

"Or he might come and take you and me to the Zoo on Sunday. That's the proper sort of thing for a brother and a friend to do."

"I hate that place in the Regent's Park," said Lord Chiltern.

"When were you there last," demanded Miss Effingham.

"When I came home once from Eton. But I won't go again till I can come home from Eton again." Then he altered his tone as he continued to speak. "People would look at me as if I were the wildest beast in the whole collection."

"Then," said Violet, "if you won't go to Lady Baldock's or to the Zoo, we must confine ourselves to Laura's drawing-room;—unless, indeed, you like to take me to the top of the Monument."

"I'll take you to the top of the Monument with pleasure."

"What do you say, Laura?"

"I say that you are a foolish girl," said Lady Laura, "and that I will have nothing to do with such a scheme."

"Then there is nothing for it but that you should come here; and as you live in the house, and as I am sure to be here every morning, and as you have no possible occupation for your time, and as we have nothing particular to do with ours,—I daresay I shan't see you again before I go to my aunt's in Berkeley Square.

"Very likely not," he said.

"And why not, Oswald?" asked his sister.

He passed his hand over his face before he answered her. "Because she and I run in different grooves now, and are not such meet playfellows as we used to be once. Do you remember my taking you away right through Saulsby Wood once on the old pony, and not bringing you back till tea-time, and Miss Blink going and telling my father?"

"Do I remember it? I think it was the happiest day in my life. His pockets were crammed full of gingerbread and Everton toffy, and we had three bottles of lemonade slung on to the pony's saddlebows. I thought it was a pity that we should ever come back."

"It was a pity," said Lord Chiltern.

"But, nevertheless, substantially necessary," said Lady Laura.

"Failing our power of reproducing the toffy, I suppose it was," said Violet.

"You were not Miss Effingham then," said Lord Chiltern.

"No,—not as yet. These disagreeable realities of life grow upon one; do they not? You took off my shoes and dried them for me at a woodman's cottage. I am obliged to put up with my maid's doing those things now. And Miss Blink the mild is changed for Lady Baldock the martinet. And if I rode about with you in a wood all day I should be sent to Coventry instead of to bed. And so you see everything is changed as well as my name."

"Everything is not changed," said Lord Chiltern, getting up from his seat. "I am not changed,—at least not in this, that as I then loved you better than any being in the world,—better even than Laura there,—so do I love you now infinitely the best of all. Do not

look so surprised at me. You knew it before as well as you do now; —and Laura knows it. There is no secret to be kept in the matter among us three."

"But, Lord Chiltern,—" said Miss Effingham, rising also to her feet, and then pausing, not knowing how to answer him. There had been a suddenness in his mode of addressing her which had, so to say, almost taken away her breath; and then to be told by a man of his love before his sister was in itself, to her, a matter so surprising, that none of those words came at her command which will come, as though by instinct, to young ladies on such occasions.

"You have known it always," said he, as though he were angry with her.

"Lord Chiltern," she replied, "you must excuse me if I say that you are, at the least, very abrupt. I did not think when I was going back so joyfully to our old childish days that you would turn the tables on me in this way."

"He has said nothing that ought to make you angry," said Lady Laura.

"Only because he has driven me to say that which will make me appear to be uncivil to himself. Lord Chiltern, I do not love you with that love of which you are speaking now. As an old friend I have always regarded you, and I hope that I may always do so." Then she got up and left the room.

"Why were you so sudden with her,—so abrupt,—so loud?" said his sister, coming up to him and taking him by the arm almost in anger.

"It would make no difference," said he. "She does not care for me."

"It makes all the difference in the world," said Lady Laura. "Such a woman as Violet cannot be had after that fashion. You must begin again."

"I have begun and ended," he said.

"That is nonsense. Of course you will persist. It was madness to speak in that way to-day. You may be sure of this, however, that there is no one she likes better than you. You must remember that you have done much to make any girl afraid of you."

"I do remember it."

"Do something now to make her fear you no longer. Speak to her softly. Tell her of the sort of life which you would live with her. Tell her that all is changed. As she comes to love you, she will believe you when she would believe no one else on that matter."

"Am I to tell her a lie?" said Lord Chiltern, looking his sister full in the face. Then he turned upon his heel and left her.

SAINT PAULS.

JANUARY, 1868.

ALL FOR GREED.

CHAPTER XI.

MADEMOISELLE FÉLICIE'S HUSBAND.

THE "fortnight" which Monsieur de Vérancour had begged from De Champmorin's notary was past, and another week added to it, and still there was no news of the money, and the suspense endured by the unfortunate Vicomte was becoming intolerable; and various slight signs were here and there appearing of Mademoiselle Félicie's matrimonial defeat being likely to stand revealed to the general public. It was really beyond bearing! And the worst of it was, that it was impossible not to be grateful to poor, good, patiently-toiling Monsieur Richard for the manifest trouble he was taking. He never totally deprived the sorely perplexed father of hope, never announced to him the failure of his negotiations, or put himself in the position of a man who had done his utmost and could do no more; but, on the contrary, played with his solicitor after the most tantalising fashion, and was for ever showing him a chance of the attainment of their ends. Their ends! —for of his zeal in the cause of the family, Monsieur Richard left no doubt. And the Vicomte felt it was the "family," the house of Vérancour, which was being served;—and that was as it should be. It would have been presumptuous in Monsieur Richard to have tried to render a service to the Vicomte, out of personal friendship; whereas, besides being convenient, it was creditable to a man like Richard Prévost to wish so ardently to serve the interests of an illustrious race. And from the point of view of "ma maison," as Monsieur le Vicomte would perpetually repeat to himself, it was gratifying to observe the plebeian's devotion, while it did away with the necessity for any personal gratitude, which was also pleasing.

Such was Monsieur Richard's desire to obtain for his noble patron the sum required for the establishment of Mademoiselle Félicie, that

he was for ever acquainting him with some new plan that his untiring ingenuity had devised, and that must be certain to succeed;—only just in the teeth of this "certainty," something of the most impossible kind invariably occurred which dashed all the seemingly so well-founded hopes to the ground. There was only one simple operation that Monsieur Richard never proposed; and that was to dispose of any securities of his own at a great loss, and bring the proceeds to the Vicomte. No! it was always a question of "raising" the money from some one else, and in this transaction Monsieur Richard was doomed to perpetual disappointment. As to buying the "Grandes Bruyères," as his uncle had been ready to do, that was utterly out of the question. Monsieur Richard had no ready money; everything was absorbed by this purchase of the Châteaubréville estate.

"It is a very heavy responsibility," said Monsieur Richard, one evening when he was sitting with the family at the Château, round the smouldering fire, "a very heavy responsibility;" and he sighed, and ventured to take up Vévette's scissors from the table and examine them attentively.

Monsieur de Vérancour placed his two hands on his knees, bending forwards, and looking intently at the toes of his thick boots. "Well!" rejoined he, with a kind of grunt, "I confess it passes me to make out why you have done it. I should call it a terrible imprudence. To go and saddle yourself with land,—with a very considerable landed property indeed!—when nothing obliges you to do so. I confess that goes beyond me;" and the Vicomte threw himself back in his chair as if he gave the problem up in despair. "That we," continued he, after a momentary pause, "should go on impoverishing ourselves to keep up old historic memories, and prevent the glorious sound of old names from being lost in the horrid roar of Revolutions,—that is comprehensible; it is one of the many sacrifices to which our noblesse obliges us. And how many are there of us who can do it, even? Not one in a hundred. We, who are identical with the soil, we are forced to sell it."

"Perhaps," suggested timidly Monsieur Richard, "perhaps that is why we buy it."

But the Vicomte did not seem at all impressed by the force of this argument; for, unheeding the interruption, he continued, "You people of the new school, you nouveaux riches, are so completely free! Nothing trammels or binds you. You can absolutely do whatever you choose; you have nothing to keep up—no traditions, no names, no ancestors who have a right to expect from you the sacrifice of all mere worldly advantages to the respect for their dignity. We are trammelled, fettered, chained down on all sides, whilst you are free as air. And yet you are always seeking to forge some chain for yourselves. Land, forsooth! land! that it is with which you nouveaux riches are always burdening yourselves."

"It is possible," edged in meekly Monsieur Richard, "that we may wish to found something."

"Found what?" exclaimed the Vicomte, with truly superb disdain. "It takes ages to found an order in the state. Nobody founded us. We were! What was the use of putting us down? Found, indeed! I should like to know what the men of to-day, the men without names, can found?"

"Not an old nobility, certainly," replied Monsieur Richard gently, and with a smile, "but perhaps a new aristocracy."

"Whew!" half whistled Monsieur de Vérancour, with a supremely contemptuous curl of the lip. "That takes four generations at least, and heaps of money!" And, getting up and standing with his back to the fire, he continued, "Why, now, look at what you're doing. When you've bought and paid for the Châteaubréville property, you'll have to put it in order, and restore the house,—it's shockingly out of repair,—and furnish it."

"There's a great deal of splendid old furniture in it," interrupted Richard Prévost.

"Yes; but old—very old," retorted the Vicomte; "out of keeping with the habits of modern——" he seemed at a loss for a proper term, "of modern——" he hesitated again.

"You mean out of keeping with the habits of la petite bourgeoisie," said Richard, coming to his assistance. "But, Monsieur le Vicomte," added he, "I intend to furnish, and I hope keep up Châteaubréville on a scale not quite unfitting the importance of the place."

"The deuce you do, my dear fellow. Why, then, you'll not be able to do it under a hundred thousand francs a year."

"I do not count upon doing it for so little," answered humbly Monsieur Richard.

"Peste!" ejaculated Monsieur de Vérancour, and the look which accompanied the expression seemed to say, "Where have these canaille stolen all this gold?"

A hundred thousand francs of income! Oh, the magic of those few words! Mademoiselle Félicie let her tapestry drop upon her lap, and surveyed poor Monsieur Richard from under her eyelids with such a strange look, but a gracious one decidedly.

"Diable!" pursued the Vicomte. "Well, then, you may make a marriage,—a good marriage; it will be in your power to marry a well-born girl without a fortune."

"If you would help—would guide me," murmured Richard.

"I know of none such," retorted the Vicomte haughtily; "but I know that in Paris, for instance, there are plenty of reduced families who will give their daughters to anybody who is rich. It is quite a thing of the present day, quite a new thing in France. It has been for nearly two centuries the practice to renovate the lustre of ancient names by marrying the eldest sons of illustrious houses to large

fortunes embodied in base-born girls. There you have the "savonnette à vilain" of the Regency and of Louis XV., but it is only recently that nobly-born girls have been sacrificed to become the mothers of shopkeepers. However, so it is now, and certain it is that money can do anything. Therefore, my dear Monsieur Richard, as I said before, if you have a hundred thousand francs a year to spend, I do not see why you should not marry a wife whom the ladies of the province should visit."

Monsieur Richard bowed low and deferentially, as though he felt the full value of the announcement made to him, and nothing in his manner indicated that he was other than flattered by the Vicomte's behaviour; for, in truth, the Vicomte meant to be particularly kind, affable, and condescending, patronising, nay,—even paternal.

Mademoiselle Félicie, by reason of the thirty years' difference of age between herself and her father, saw things in a slightly different light, and was just capable of understanding that Monsieur Richard might be anything but flattered by her parent's naïvely contemptuous familiarity; and when their visitor rose to go, she proceeded to a small side-table in the half-lighted drawing-room and asked him if he would not take a glass of eau sucrée. Upon his acceptance of that favour, she mixed the harmless beverage for him herself, tendered it to him, and as she did so, allowed her white hand unconsciously to touch his, lingered for a few seconds ere she relinquished her hold upon the glass, and with a perfectly angelic look asked Monsieur Richard if he were quite sure there was sugar enough in the water.

And then another week went by, and it seemed somehow or other to be becoming known that Mademoiselle Félicie would not marry Monsieur de Champmorin. How it had transpired, no one could say; but it was thought to be traceable to the Champmorin notary, who in moments of effusion and confidential talk with trusted friends, had discoursed upon the impossibility of girls marrying without money, and had unguardedly alluded to his client as "much to be pitied"—insinuating, as it were, that Mademoiselle Félicie,—having been fallen in love with, unprovided as she was with any dot,—could not be held altogether blameless.

Richard Prévost abstained for three days from going near the Château. On the fourth Monsieur de Vérancour sought him. Monsieur Richard was warming himself before a huge, blazing fire in his study, when a loud ring was heard at the door bell, a loud footstep quickly followed it in the hall, and dispensing with Madame Jean's attendance, Monsieur le Vicomte opened the door for himself, and stalked into the room.

"Well, there it is at last!" he exclaimed, throwing himself into a chair and letting his brown felt hat drop on the floor beside him. "I always thought it would come to this with all these confounded delays; and now there it is! S—— mille tonnerres de Dieu!" And

all those good principles which were to keep this "right-thinking" fils des croisés from swearing, flew to the winds, and he indulged in the comfort of a string of oaths, as if he had been no more than one of those long-forgotten Saulnier forefathers of his, picking up salt in the Breton marshes.

"I beseech of you," entreated Monsieur Richard, rising, "do not give up hope. I have, on the contrary, good news. I should have gone to see you last evening if the weather had not been so bad and my cough troublesome, but I was going down to the Château now. I have a letter from an old friend of my poor uncle's in Nantes, and I am positively not without hopes that perhaps even a sale of Les Grandes Bruyères might be possible. Here, I will read you the letter. I got it yesterday." And Monsieur Richard began busily throwing over the letters and papers before him.

"The devil take your letter!" stormed the Vicomte; "what do all the letters in the world matter now? Why, Champmorin refuses!" And striding up to the table, Monsieur de Vérancour brought down his hand upon it with a heavy thump, and the two men looked each other in the face.

"Re—fu—ses!" stammered out Richard Prévost. "Oh! Monsieur le Vicomte, I am constrained to say I cannot master the sense of those words. Monsieur de Champmorin refuses the honour of being the husband of Mademoiselle de Vérancour!"

The exasperated parent was somewhat mollified at sight of Monsieur Richard's indignation. "Read that," said he, handing over a letter to him.

Monsieur Richard did read, and was seemingly overpowered by what he read, for his countenance was thoroughly what his countrymen term "bouleversé" when he returned the paper to its owner.

"You will admit," observed the latter, "that nothing is left for me to do. It is as complete a congé as can well be given, and, moreover, couched in such respectful and mournful terms that probably public opinion would expect me to condole with the writer."

Richard Prévost took the letter back into his hand, pored over it anew, and then replied with an air and in a tone of supreme depression.

"No!" he sighed, as though vanquished by fate, "there is nothing left to do,—nothing!"

Monsieur de Vérancour sprang from his seat, and paced up and down the room. "Nothing!" echoed he, with stentorian lungs; "that is exactly what drives me mad! I feel ready to shoot myself because I have no earthly pretext for shooting Champmorin!"

"Good God!" exclaimed Richard Prévost in a tone of downright agony, "to think of such a thing! A demoiselle de Vérancour refused by a mere country gentleman! Refused! Such a person as Mademoiselle Félicie!—such birth and position!—such a name!"

The Vicomte went on pacing up and down and muttering, and Monsieur Richard went on watching him without being noticed.

"One thing must at all events be seen to," ejaculated Richard, as though struck by a sudden inspiration. "The whole must be kept secret; it must never be known that——"

"Not known!" thundered the Vicomte. "Well, my good sir, one sees what it is to live out of the world as you do! Why, it is known already. Everybody knows it. It was known before it was true! These things always are!"

"So that," groaned Monsieur Richard, "it will be public throughout the province that Mademoiselle Félicie—Ma-de-moi-selle Félicie," —and he weighed on every syllable solemnly,—"will have been given up, discarded, refused! It is too dreadful!" "Can nothing be done?" recommenced Monsieur Richard, with a kind of timid eagerness, after a silence of a few moments.

"What?" rejoined Monsieur de Vérancour.

"Indeed, it is hard to say," rejoined the other sadly; "but surely it would be possible to find some remedy. Anything would be preferable to the present position."

"I should think it would, indeed!" retorted bitterly Monsieur de Vérancour.

"Well, but—" suggested hesitatingly Monsieur Richard, "could no other parti be found?"

"Where?" cried the Vicomte. "Do you fancy, my worthy Monsieur Richard, that husbands for discarded young ladies are to be found by beating the woods for them, and that they come as snakes do when they smell the catcher's pot of boiling milk?* No, thank you! No dot, no husband! Where is there one anywhere round? Look through the department. Why, there's not even an old invalid, wanting a nurse,—not even a mésalliance to be got!"

Monsieur Richard fell to musing, and the Vicomte went on walking up and down, but he did seem comforted by the talk he was having. "Monsieur le Vicomte," at length said, in a low and unsteady tone, Richard Prévost; "there is a mésalliance, if Mademoiselle Félicie would consent to that. I know of one—a very—an extremely rich parti."

"The devil you do!" broke in Monsieur de Vérancour, stopping short in his walk. "Where is he to be found? Who is he?" Richard Prévost was pale as a ghost, so pale that the edge of his eyelids seemed quite pink, as he looked hesitatingly at his interlocutor. "Well!" exclaimed the latter, "where is he? who is he?"

"It is me, myself!" gasped out Monsieur Richard, under his breath. The stare of blank astonishment with amusement mixed, with which his proposal was met, was not likely to be ever forgotten by the unlucky suitor, whose white face turned scarlet with shame.

* In Poitou it is a trade to catch snakes, and the catchers attract them by boiling milk.

"You?" echoed Monsieur de Vérancour. "You?" And then struggling with the strong sense of the ridiculous, "You?" he shouted a third time. The apparent fun of the thing fairly mastered him, and he roared with laughter, as he threw himself into the nearest chair, and held his sides.

The Vicomte's fit of hilarity lasted long enough for Monsieur Richard to determine upon what attitude he should assume. He assumed one of injured dignity, and reminded his hearer, when he was able to attend to him, that he was exceedingly rich, and that his offer was a proof of his devotion to the house of Vérancour.

Conversation was not easy after this incident, and so the Vicomte soon prepared to take his leave. When he did so, he held out his hand to Monsieur Richard, and spoke agian to his young friend with his features not yet quit of the laugh that had convulsed them. "There shall be no rancour about it!" said he, with jovial graciousness. "I am sure you meant it well, but you know it really was too droll. I ought to apologise for laughing so immoderately, but, on my honour, it was irresistible. However, I shan't forget the intention, and, I assure you, you have done me good; it has been quite a distraction." And, with a good-humoured shake of the hand, he left the room and the house, and once in the street, had another laugh to himself.

Whether Monsieur de Vérancour would have altogether liked the look with which Monsieur Richard followed him when his back was turned, is another question.

CHAPTER XII.

RAOUL'S DISTRESS.

Just before the end of October a little incident had occurred which had frightened D—— "from its propriety," and afforded the old cronies of the place an opportunity for declaring that the end of the world was coming. It had become known that Monsieur Léon Duprez, that most magnificent "cock of the walk," whose example, said the elders, was so disastrous for the younger generation, had sailed for Australia, under a feigned name, thus escaping at once from his debtors and his admiring townsfolk, from his colleagues on various Boards, and from Madame Josephine Le Vaillant, the wife of the Juge de Paix. Naturally this was "un evènement," and, what with one thing and another, the little town of D—— did appear to be aping its betters, and losing all right to be denominated a "quiet retreat."

In the course of time,—that is, towards the first days of November,—what are termed "proceedings" were taken against Monsieur Duprez's property, and his house and furniture were to be put up for sale; though the reports of what his debts in Paris amounted to made

any price that might be reached by the disposal of his paternal estate seem a mere "drop in the ocean."

All this really was very agitating for the public mind of D——. Here, in less than a month, had there been a murder, a financial break-up,—or, as the commentators delighted to call it, a "scandal,"—and a matrimonial alliance broken off!

In the midst of such exciting events the fact that Raoul de Morville was going up to Paris to be a clerk in the Marine Ministry, passed unnoticed. And, above all, it entered no one's head that there could be any possible connection between his acceptance of official drudgery in a subordinate position and the ruin of the some-time cock of the walk who had been his intimate friend.

Old Morville spoke but little with his neighbours, but to the few whom he met he grunted out the announcement of his son's approaching departure, and received a most humiliating meed of pity in exchange; for, being universally disliked, pity seemed the natural vexation to inflict upon him, and he got plenty of it.

Raoul came to say good-bye to his friends at the Château, and found the Vicomte together with his two daughters.

"I'm sincerely rejoiced you came to-day instead of to-morrow," said Monsieur de Vérancour.

"I go to-morrow," interrupted Raoul.

"If you would let me finish, I meant to say that to-morrow you would have found no one here," continued the Vicomte; "for we have to drive over to the Grandes Bruyères, and shall be away the whole day, and I would not have missed seeing you for a great deal, mon garçon. I shall always feel a real interest in you, for you put us all in mind of happier times,—of the times when your mother and theirs,"—pointing to his daughters,—"were both alive. I shall be heartily glad to hear of your well-doing, and of your advancement."

At the moment when Monsieur de Vérancour had mentioned the journey of the next day to the Grandes Bruyères, a glance, quick as lightning, was exchanged between Raoul and Vévette, who was seated somewhat behind her father. It was only the work of one second, for the girl lowered her eyes instantly to her work, and blushed crimson.

The leave-taking, when it came, was an affectionate one, and while the two young ladies shook hands cordially with their parting guest, the Vicomte embraced him with genuine tenderness, and specially enjoined upon him to write to them from Paris.

It is, probably, needless to inform my readers that, the next day, only Félicie accompanied her father upon the projected excursion. Vévette discovered an excuse for remaining at home, and at home she stayed, and was virtually alone in the house. Céleste, the all-pervading functionary, was at all times too glad not to be summoned from her lawful dominions in the vast subterranean kitchens of the once grand

old dwelling, and from her Vévette knew she was safe. Baptiste, the "man of all work," was absent with the carriage, and had put on his old livery to look like a coachman; his wife, old Suzette, who was the most dangerous person of the lot, was weeding in the garden, and doing some work set out for her by her spouse in the artichoke beds. She was not to be got rid of, or eluded; that Vévette well knew, for Suzette was a lynx-eyed old woman, and, moreover, her employment fixed her right opposite the pavilion. Nothing was left for it then but to receive Raoul inside the house. It was for the last time, and Vévette, after a great deal of discussion with herself, and with much of what she believed to be resistance, yielded.

Raoul waited behind some trees just outside the garden wall to the south,—in a spot which no one ever passed. About three o'clock Vévette came, and gave him a signal; he climbed the wall, followed the girl silently, and in a few seconds was alone with her in the usual sitting-room of the family.

Mute and mournful were the first greetings of the pair; but, in the midst of what was the natural grief attendant on their parting, it seemed as though some other trouble lay hidden, and each marked this in the other. As Raoul held in his the hand of the shrinking girl, "Vévette," he exclaimed, bitterly, "why do you shrink from me in this way? what is it you shrink from?" Vévette cast an anxious glance around her. Raoul shook his head: "It is not that!" he said impatiently. "You are not alarmed lest we should be surprised; you know that no one will come near this room for hours; that we are perfectly safe; that there are half-a-dozen ways of escaping if one heard but a mouse stir. No; that is not it. I am not deceived by the look that you send wandering out from your eyes all around us, for I see the look that lies behind it. What is it, Vévette? what is it? Sometimes it seems to me as though there were a phantom, a dreadful something, that would always rise up between us, even when we are man and wife." And he tried to draw her close to him, but she still shrank and trembled. "Vévette!" he urged in a softer tone, pressing her hand in both his own. "I am going. We may not meet for months. It is the last time we can speak together, the very last time; I have but one hope, but one comfort in the world,—your love. Do you look upon your promise to me as a sacred one?"

A faint "Yes," escaped her lips.

"Do you count upon mine to you as absolutely as though I had solemnly pledged you my faith at the altar?"

This time the girl looked up, and looked straight and unabashed into her lover's eyes, as she answered distinctly, "Oh! that indeed I do."

"Then, Vévette, my own love," he rejoined, throwing his arms impetuously round her, "what can it be that you fear? For God's

sake, tell me. Do not let me go with this weight upon my heart. What is it that you dread, my wife, my surely to be wedded wife?"

"Oh! Raoul! Raoul!" cried she, burying her face in her hands, "the sin! the sin! the fault that must not be forgiven,—the sin that will never leave us!"

He partially loosened his hold of her, and whilst one arm encircled her waist, and he sought with the other to draw her hands from her burning cheeks. "Vévette," he said, in a tone that was almost stern; "you are wanting in respect to yourself, wanting in respect to my wife, whom I have worshipped as a saint. What sin have you ever committed, Vévette? Your own scrupulousness is less pure than greater ignorance would be. I know where the fault lies;—in the teachings of your convent; in the gloomy, narrow, false, impious teachings of people who do not know that true love is bright, strong, and pure as steel or flame. Answer me, dear; is marriage an Institution, sanctified by the Church? Is the marriage vow blessed? Is marriage a sacrament?"

"Of course it is," murmured she, with downcast eyes.

"And you believe that when girls give themselves away in marriage to husbands who are at least totally indifferent to them, the bond is a holy one, and the wives are blessed among women! Do you ever ask yourself, Vévette, why some wives are faithless?"

"Because they are tempted by the Evil One," said Vévette, timidly.

"No, my sweet one," continued Raoul, looking tenderly at her and softly stroking her hair. "It is because they do not love their husbands, and that it is dangerous to ask from the weak creatures that we are more than is humanly possible."

"But, Raoul," hesitatingly whispered she, "it is wrong;—the Church forbids it."

"God does not forbid it," answered he, gravely. "His Word nowhere forbids it. Suppose, my own, we were married this very day, would it still be wrong that you should love me?"

Poor Vévette trembled, and blushed, and looked the very picture of distress and confusion, as she attempted to reply. "Yes, dear Raoul," stammered she, "it would always be wrong. It is a sin,—a dreadful sin,—and God will punish us. It is a dreadful sin for a woman to love her husband even, as—as—I—love you!" she faintly uttered at last.

Raoul folded her gently, almost paternally, to his breast. "Poor child!" he said in a very mournful tone; "and so, it is not the circumstances of the love, not its concealment, not the momentary untruth,—no! it is the love itself which is the sin! poor little one!" And he remained silent and thoughtful for some time, with Vévette's head lying upon his shoulder and his own head resting upon her brow.

More than an hour went by, and young Morville tried to make his future bride comprehend her duties to him and to herself, and he succeeded in so far as that she agreed to subordinate all other considerations to her passionate devotion for him; but that the devotion itself was sinful,—that being passionate it must be so,—that remained ineradicable from poor little Vévette's creed.

"And now, Raoul," pleaded the girl in her turn, as the moment for separation came, "what is the trouble that is hanging over you;—for there is one. You have some other care besides the mere grief, deep as it is, of leaving. May I not know it?" she added, looking up imploringly at him.

A cloud darkened Raoul's countenance, he pressed his lips together, and drew a long hard breath. "No!" was his rejoinder. "I cannot share that trouble with you, Vévette."

"Then you have a trouble?" she retorted, eagerly.

"Most men have; and there are many that must be borne in solitude and silence. Some burdens may be shared by those we love; but some there are that it is not good to halve, even with one's wife." The tone in which this was spoken left no room for further entreaty, and threw a deeper chill over the final parting of the lovers than either could have anticipated.

In the sense of utter loneliness which fell upon Vévette when Raoul was gone, there was something mixed which she could not define; a sort of shadow which prevented the absolute blank. "Had Raoul a secret? what was it?" that thought occupied her.

Scarcely had he left the room through the window opening on the terrace, when a knock came at the door. Vévette started, and bade the visitor enter, with a beating heart and quivering voice. It was Mère Jubine's Louison with a letter in her hand. She tendered it to Vévette with a curtsey, saying it was from Monsieur Richard Prévost. When opened it was found to contain another letter, addressed to Félicie, and a few lines by which the younger sister was humbly requested to deliver the enclosure to the elder. It concerned, observed the writer, "an act of charity!"

"Is Monsieur Richard ill?" asked Vévette. The girl said she did not know, but did not think he was particularly strong in this damp weather, but that she had promised to deliver the letter. And then she went away.

Vévette, in her natural simplicity and her present agitation of spirit, did perhaps think it rather odd that Monsieur Richard should send a letter to Félicie; but what failed to strike her as strange was, that Mère Jubine's Louison should be his messenger.

CHAPTER XIII.

A PRUDENT YOUNG LADY.

I HAVE not yet told you how very very pretty Mademoiselle Félicie was. She was not lovely;—her sister was that;—neither was she handsome, or beautiful. In each of these words there was something above or something beyond Mademoiselle Félicie. But she was that supremely jolie femme which a Frenchwoman alone ever is. Rather under than over the middle height, the first idea she gave you was that of perfect proportion. She had not the most beautiful throat, or the most beautiful arm, or hand, or shoulder, in the world: no one particular limb reminded you of a statue; but the whole went together marvellously well! Each part so fitted the other, the ensemble was so harmonious, so pleasant to the eye, that you were charmed without knowing why, and would have voted to be insupportable whoever should have attempted to persuade you that you ought not to be so. All the lines were soft and rounded in Félicie's face and figure. In her whole being there was not an angle, or anything abrupt. She was all grace, all charm. Her voice was insinuating, her movements undulating, her looks caressing. She was precisely that kind of Frenchwoman whom, if you have the most distant dream of remaining,—however little,—your own master, you had best never meet. She never alarms and never releases you.

Her grandmother, la belle Madame de Vérancour, had, as old Martin Prévost had told his nephew, been Félicie's perfect prototype; and, Heaven knows, her domestic career had not been one to render the position of her husband an enviable one. As a young woman of sixteen, before the Revolution, she had been distinguished by one exploit only, but that one was enough. She was reputed to have beaten the famous Duc de Lauzun hollow, and to have considerably helped to ruin him, whilst absolutely vanquishing his inconstancy. She went by the name of "La Provinciale qui a roué Lauzun," and after the great catastrophe, she carried her devastations into her own department, and, till past fifty, levied contributions of all kinds upon the male population for many leagues round. Married or single, all paid tribute; and the evil-tongued declared that all classes were admitted alike to compete for her favour. Some went even further, and hinted that the present Vicomte was the son of a Sous-Préfet of the Empire, whom she certainly had managed to preserve from the missal under the Restoration.

La belle Madame de Vérancour was not of a religious turn of mind. She did not even grow devout with old age, but died, it was said, in an altogether unsatisfactory manner. Her portrait, painted by Madame Lebrun, in the full costume of her palmy days of Versailles, hung in

the drawing-room which the two sisters had arranged at the Château; and when Félicie happened to be alone, she would sit intently gazing at the image, with a look that was not easily definable. Was it envy, or was it merely curiosity alone?

Except for the powder which disguised the wavy chestnut hair —that thick, naturally curling, blond cendré hair, which Félicie dressed so exquisitely,—except for that, everything was alike in the too celebrated Lady of Vérancour and her descendant; the same calm, satin skin, with just enough of delicate colour to prevent its being pale; the same small nose, with its transparent nostrils; the same finely arched eyebrows, and strangely fascinating light hazel eyes; the same —no! not quite the same mouth. The epoch had set its stamp there, and Lauzun's mistress had the rich full-blossomed lips that perhaps excused something out of much that they explained; whilst our Mademoiselle de Vérancour possessed lips so thin that they were hardly more than the edges of the mouth; bright red lines closing over twin rows of exquisitely pearl-like teeth,—with also the one little fault that they were rather pointed, rather sharp.

That was the impress of the age. Madame de Vérancour, la belle, had been lavish in every possible sense. This is not the defect of modern France. One person in D—— had even been ungallant enough,—it was the Doctor, who disliked the people of the Château because they were all so healthy that they never "consulted!"—one person had replied to a remark about Félicie's attractions:—"Attractive, may be; jolie comme un ange, may be; but that girl's an attorney!"

Mademoiselle Félicie did certainly give those who had dealings with her a notion that she was practical; but then irregularity, let alone prodigality, is accounted such a sin, and to be wanting in order brings down such reproof upon a woman in the France of our day!

Hitherto Félicie's field of action had been a limited one, and her adversaries had been mostly female ones. Of these she had not left one unconquered; and at the convent at Poitiers she was the "pattern-girl," the example held up by all the sisters,—excepting only the unfortunate Madame Marie Claire, who took refuge with Vévette; —and she had been pronounced dogmatically by Notre Mère to be certain to be an "honour to her sex," to be eminently wise and prudent and circumspect; strong against all sentimentality, and of an equally balanced mind. Monsieur de Vérancour, whilst congratulating himself upon having such a daughter, was not altogether without a certain feeling of inferiority when in her presence, and it had been affirmed by Céleste, who came herself under Félicie's direct control, that he was afraid of her.

After Champmorin's withdrawal from the projected matrimonial engagement, the Vicomte certainly did feel slightly embarrassed, and had not yet made up his mind as to the precise terms in which he

should impart to his daughter that she was not likely to be married so soon as had been supposed.

She saved him all trouble on that point.

"Dear father," she said, one evening, in the sweetest of all possible tones, and preliminarily kissing him on the forehead, with the most touching grace—"Dear father; I know you have been annoyed,—pained,—about something that touches me and my establishment. I can guess what has happened; and though it is not customary for a young girl to mix herself up in such matters, still ours is an exceptional case, and I feel it incumbent upon me to share with you the burdens laid upon us by our position;—by the nobility of our name so sadly at war with the narrowness of our means."

"You always were an angel, Félicie," exclaimed her father; "but it is not fitting that——"

"I beg your pardon, father," interrupted she; "it is fitting that we should talk together over all this, for it is not fitting that our name should go a-begging. The daughters of illustrious houses are not constrained to the same little prudish practices as those of bourgeois origin, and where the honour of the race is at stake they must lay aside prejudice, and see what is best to be done, just as, in other ages, they would, in the absence of a garrison, have had to defend the château, arms in hand. I know poor Monsieur de Champmorin has been obliged to retire."

Monsieur de Vérancour made a movement.

"He is not to be blamed, father," resumed Félicie; "he must not be blamed; we have nothing to reproach him with, and it would be unseemly and wrong in us to bear the slightest ill-will towards him."

"I bear him no ill-will whatever," muttered the Vicomte; "but those about him have talked, and will talk, and the position is a very awkward one."

"Yes, father dear, of course," rejoined Félicie, in her very blandest tones; "of course it is next to impossible to prevent people like notaries and all that class from discussing our affairs; they will talk of us; it is their chief pastime; and,—I don't deny it,—it falls naturally very heavy upon girls like us, to be made the theme of conversation of all the vulgar little bourgeois of such a miserable bit of a place as this; but that is the fault of provincial towns;—there is no other occupation save that of prying into your neighbours' concerns. If we were in Paris, instead of being in D——, we should escape all, or nearly all, the immediate effects of the disaster."

Vévette looked up from her tapestry with amazement.

"In Paris?" echoed the Vicomte. "Yes, probably so, everything passes unnoticed in Paris, as in all great centres; but what earthly chance would there ever be of our being able to get to Paris?"

There was a pause of a few seconds, and then Félicie resumed, in

a tone of discouragement, after musing for a few moments, "To be sure; it is that perpetual want of money!" and then there came another silence.

"Why is it," asked Vévette, timidly, "that so much more money seems required for two people to live upon when they marry than each would find more than sufficient if they remained single? A single man can live on very little, a single woman on less, yet, when it is a question of marrying, ten times their income appears not to be enough."

"Because, my poor child," rejoined Félicie, dogmatically, "well-born people do not marry to live, but to represent. We have to uphold our families and our names; and our duty is to take care that the children who succeed us are enabled to support their position in life with dignity. We have not yet, in spite of all Revolutions, come to such a state of things as is said to exist amongst the English, where, I believe, two individuals actually marry because they have taken some imaginary fancy for each other, and in their folly count for nothing the fortune and social standing of their children. No! we have not yet come to that."

Monsieur de Vérancour gazed at his eldest daughter with admiration, while she propounded her theories of social economy. "All that you say is right and wise," observed he with a sigh, leaning his head upon his hand; "but unluckily it brings about one result—the levelling of everything before money. Without riches, what is to be done?"

"Yes, dear papa," answered Félicie, submissively; "you are right there, as you always are, and I can't help thinking it is wrong and unchristianlike in the persons of our caste to despise money as they do." Oh! Félicie, when do they so?—"to look down upon riches, when riches have so often been brought to our very feet by Providence, in order that by uniting with them we should elevate the rich to our own level, and teach them to be pious and right-thinking like us."

"Well, I can only say riches were never brought to my feet," remarked the Vicomte; "nor do I think that I can be accused of ever having scorned them."

"If I might venture, dearest father," suggested she, with her most caressing air, "though it is wandering far away from our subject, I would say that you were very hard, quite unmerciful, the other day, to poor Monsieur Richard." The Vicomte started, and, turning round, stared his daughter full in the face. "You quite abashed and hurt him when he was telling you of the great fortune he had inherited, and of what he means to make of Châteaubréville."

"No, I declare I did not," answered stoutly Monsieur de Vérancour; "just the contrary; I told him that if he had a hundred thousand francs a year he might actually marry a lady."

"Yes," responded Félicie, with the sweetest of all feline glances and accents; "but you did not tell it him—kindly."

"Humph! as to that," grunted her father, "I don't know how I told it him. I suppose I told it him just as I would have told it any other man of his sort."

"Ah! but you see, father dear, we should be so careful of hurting the feelings of those beneath us. Men don't think of that. Women do. Poor Monsieur Richard, you see, is somewhere about the richest man in the department, besides being the most amiable and worthy young man in the world. So perfectly right-thinking. In a year's time he will be Monsieur de Châteaubréville, with a splendid country house, and an establishment in Paris, and if,—as you advised him to do,—he should marry a well-born woman, we shall all go and visit at Châteaubréville, and we should really treat him already as a friend."

"Well, so we do!" ejaculated the Vicomte; "don't I let him dine here with us? Treat him as a friend! Yes; but I should like to see you, who theorise so finely, treating him as an equal."

"We are taught that all men are equal," said sweetly Félicie.

"But nobody believes it," retorted the Vicomte. "Why, I should like to see the rebuff he would get from you, if he ventured to ask you to become his wife. Treat him as an equal indeed!"

"In the first place, papa," rejoined Félicie, gently, but with a shade more of firmness in her tone, "one does not make one's equal of a man merely by marrying him; when la grande Mademoiselle married Lauzun, it was out of her power to make him her equal."

"Maybe," interrupted Monsieur de Vérancour; "but he made her pull off his boots all the same."

"That regards her confessor, and concerns her duties of obedience: but, I repeat it, marriage binds, but does not equalise: in the next place, I would not shrink from any sacrifice that should be needed for the good of our family,—of our house."

The Vicomte sprang to his feet, and clapping his two hands upon his breast, roared at her loudly, staring at her with all his might. "You, Félicie, you! You would marry Monsieur Richard?"

"It is Monsieur Richard who would not marry me, papa," she replied with imperturbable calmness.

"You would consent to be Madame Prévost," continued her father, unheeding all interruptions.

"Never, papa," answered she, in a milder tone, and with even more calmness than before; "but I would consent to be Madame de Châteaubréville with a hundred thousand francs of income, and to live half the year in Paris, where the title of Count would be easy to obtain."

"A pretty thing, indeed, for us," sneered the Vicomte. "A title given by Monsieur Bonaparte! Why, you would be ashamed to wear it."

"A well-born woman can always do what is her duty."

All for Greed. Chap. xiii. Page 161.

"No, indeed, papa, I should not. Authority is authority always; and there is our own cousin, the Marquis de Vouvray, who has let himself be made a Chamberlain,—the title means little enough for us,—but it means still the separation from those beneath, from the mass; that is the principal thing needed."

Monsieur de Vérancour was silent for some moments, and rubbed his forehead anxiously. "Is it possible, Félicie," he asked at last, "that you can be serious? Is it possible you can mean that you would marry Monsieur Richard?"

"Father," she answered, steadily and slowly, "I tell you again there is no sacrifice I will not make to our position. I make it to you, I make it to Vevette." The latter looked up suddenly with an air almost of terror. "It is my duty. We are not on earth to think of ourselves, but of others. One of my first duties is to think of Vévette. Her turn must come in a year or two." Vévette felt herself grow cold and shudder inwardly. "And how is she to be provided for?"

"You are, indeed, a perfect heroine," said the Vicomte, with conviction, and as though humbled at the superior virtue of his child.

"Luckily," resumed she, giving an upward glance of thanksgiving, "I have always had my duty held up before my eyes, and, after all, duty is a thing which a well-born woman does easily." Poor Vévette felt more than ever what a wretched sinner she was. "The difficulty in all this," added Félicie, after a pause, "would be to bring poor Monsieur Richard to understand that he might ask for my hand." She watched her father with a very curious glance from under her eyelids whilst uttering these words. "It is a delicate and difficult negotiation. Perhaps the Abbé Leroy——"

Monsieur de Vérancour waved his hand. "I think," interrupted he, "it would be quite possible to make Monsieur Richard understand; but, of course, I must reflect on all this. I must take time."

"Dear father!" exclaimed the girl, "of course you must do whatever you think fit. I shall always obey."

"Oh, Félicie!" cried Vévette, throwing her arms round her sister's neck, when the Vicomte had retired for the night. "Can you? Can you?"

"A well-born woman can always do what is her duty, my dear Vévette," answered Mademoiselle Félicie, indulging in just a very little self-gratulation.

THE NEW MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN FAMILY.

All the antecedents of Italy, the varied character and peculiarities of the different races which constitute her people, and the special circumstances of the struggle in which she has been and is still engaged in the effort to become a nation, combine to render the spectacle of the birth-throes attending this struggle one of the most interesting that a statesman or social philosopher could be invited to witness. And pages full of interest and instruction for both those classes of students might be written on the different phases of her internal condition, as she wins her way painfully through the numberless difficulties and dangers which encompass her early years. But there is one difficulty in her path which so effectually and fatally stops the way, and renders all onward progress,—struggle as she may,—impossible, that this question alone exclusively occupies all minds and energies within the peninsula. And this same knot has the unfortunate privilege of connecting considerations, which should be left to the sole arbitrament of the young nation herself, with the interests and feelings of all the other members of the European family. So that the attention of the world beyond the Alps is also concentrated almost wholly on this one point.

Till the "Roman question" is settled, or is in a fair way of settlement, no Italian man,—governor or governed,—can successfully apply his mind or his energies to any other subject; nor can any transalpine spectator of the Italian drama interest himself in any less all-important point of the action.

The following few pages, therefore, will be devoted entirely to an attempt to state, somewhat more succinctly than has yet perhaps been done, the present position of that question, the events and circumstances which have brought it into that position, and the probable prospects of its solution, so far as the very cloud-enveloped character of the future towards which it is advancing may render possible.

We have said that the arrangement of the Roman difficulty should be left to the sole arbitrament of Italy. And there is a numerous and active section of the Italian people which holds that such an assertion, unmodified in any way, does but state the absolute and inalienable right of the nation. But unhappily, the writer,—who would look at matters as they really stand from no partisan point of view,—is constrained to add a rider to this proposition. He must say that the Roman question should be left to the sole arbitrament of

Italy, if that question had any analogy with aught else which international rules of conduct ordinarily govern. Most unfortunately it has no such analogy. And probably all Italians, save the extreme party which has been referred to, would admit that the disastrous peculiarities of the Roman difficulty do constitute a necessity for acting in regard to it in concert with the other nations, or, at least, with a due amount of regard to their feelings and prejudices on the subject. Indeed, the ready acceptance on the part of the Italian Government of the French Emperor's proposals for a conference of the European states, to be assembled for the definitive settlement of the questions in debate between Italy and the Pope, is of course a full admission of this. And it may be assumed, probably, that now, in the position in which the attempt and failure of Garibaldi have placed the nation, not even the "party of action," with the exception of that small portion of it which hopes to find in the Roman difficulty a lever for overturning the monarchy, have much objection to the assemblage of such a conference.

The position at the present moment is a purely expectant one; and the next point in the game, for which everybody is waiting, is to see whether a conference can be assembled or not. M. Forcade, by no means, as we all know, much disposed to see the policy of the Emperor in too favourable a light, seems to think, as appears from the "Chronique de la Quinzaine," in the "Revue des Deux Mondes" for the 15th of November, that the invitation to Europe will be favourably received. We, having the advantage of writing a few weeks later, are still in much doubt on the subject. At this moment in which we write, it still seems improbable that the Conference should be assembled, but even yet the question is in doubt. Should it, however, meet, what power will it have of solving the difficulty? Is there any likelihood that the Papal Court will consent to be bound by the decisions of any such areopagitic body, be they ever so unanimous? And if Europe, as represented by the members of such a conference, were to proceed to arrange a status for the Pope, irrespective of his own voice in the matter, with the intention of carrying their decision into effect by force,—is that what France means or wishes? Would France consent to this? M. Forcade, indeed, in the writing already referred to, evidently contemplates such an issue from the labours of the proposed conference. If, says he, it should be found impossible to establish the bases of an understanding between the Pope and the Italian Government, "the implied consequence of the failure of this vast diplomatic enterprise would be the disengagement of France from her responsibilities in the Roman question. France would cease to be the sole guarantee of the temporal power. She would no longer sustain alone a struggle against the nature of things." Such would doubtless be the view of the fitting policy of France held by the school of politicians to which

M. Forcade belongs. Such would be the view which probably most Englishmen would hold as the wisest, best, and most useful. But is that the view which the Imperial Government would be likely to hold? It may be feared not. What is it to be presumed that the Emperor wishes in this matter? He has always been an enigmatic man. The Sibylline unclearness and tortuousness of his utterances have done much to confirm the world in its opinion of the profundity of his sagacity. We shall hardly be likely to get much out of any attempt to discover that very important factor in our calculations,—what the Emperor really wants,—by any examination of his official talk. But it may perhaps be possible to attain no inconsiderable degree of assurance on this subject from a consideration of his past acts, and of what, on the universal principles of human wishes, he must be disposed to desire. This path of inquiry into the riddles set before us by our nineteenth-century sphinx has frequently been tried. But in this matter of the Emperor's probable intentions and line of conduct as to the Roman question a very fundamental error, as it seems to us, has been allowed to vitiate the calculation.

It has been repeatedly said, by very various classes of inquirers, that surely the Emperor will not so manage the Roman question as to allow it to become the means of undoing his own work in Italy. M. Forcade, in his last "Chronique," reiterates the same argument. The Emperor, it is urged, has done so much to accomplish the unification of Italy that it cannot be supposed that he will now permit the Roman question to lead to the undoing, or to imminent risk of the undoing, of that work.

Now it really is very important that the value of this inference should be examined by the light of a few indisputable facts in the imperial conduct, which would seem to have been absolutely forgotten by the world, so wholly are they ignored in the daily speculations which are rife on this subject. It is important that these facts should be borne in mind, not only for the purpose of forming a probable judgment as to the line of French policy with regard to the present phase of the Roman question, but for the sake also of the authenticity of the history of these troublous times of ours.

It is asserted, or assumed rather, that Napoleon III. has wittingly and intentionally used the power of France for the purpose of accomplishing Italian unification. Is this true?

It is true that the Emperor gave that assistance to Italy which alone, it may be fairly assumed, enabled her to throw off the Austrian yoke. He found Italy a congeries of small and very weak states, the rulers of which, all, save one, were under the immediate influence of Austria, and existed only by her patronage and protection. And Piedmont, which alone was not in this position, was in a condition of chronic hostility against Austria, with whose power the little sub-Alpine kingdom was wholly unable to cope. The Emperor found

this condition of things in Italy; and he used the power of France to liberate Italy,—all but one corner,—from this influence, and this oppression. Much has been said about the gratitude due from Italy to France on this score. This is not the place to write the pages, which much need to be written, on the extensive subject of international gratitude. But it may be remarked, obiter, that if the Emperor Napoleon used the power and the treasure of France in effecting this object pour les beaux yeux de l'Italie, then the widows and orphans and tax-payers of France would have a terrible accusation to bring against him for misusing the power intrusted to him for the benefit of France. We do not think that such an accusation against the Emperor would be well grounded. We have no idea that he led the power of France against Austria in Italy for love of Italy. We believe that he had in view the legitimate object of benefiting France, and through France himself, as far as his lights enabled him to see the means of doing so. We believe that it was his recognised purpose to substitute French influence for Austrian in the peninsula;—to have there a number of small states as before, but subjected to French instead of to Austrian authority. People repeat again and again the famous boasting promise that Italy should be free from the Alps to the Adriatic,—a sonorous phrase, just as meaningless as the word "free" is far from being a precise and intelligible definition of a scheme of social polity. But what it clearly could not mean is, that Italy should be one,—should form one nation, with one government, from the Alps to the Adriatic. Whatever the nature or amount of the "freedom" promised to her, there was no promise here of governmental unity. Was it to be expected that France or her ruler should wish to raise up a united nation of six-and-twenty millions on her frontier? Was it in accordance with the well-known traditional policy of France? Was it in accordance with the sentiments of France, as manifested on the more recent occasion of the formation of another large nation on another frontier? So terrible did the formation of this Italian nation seem to the French mind, that as soon as it appeared probable that such would be the issue of the Emperor's action in the peninsula, bitter lamentations and violent attacks on his policy were heard in the French Senate, which was in those utterances the wholly faithful representative of the national heart. "What!" it was said, "raise up a nation of twenty-two,"—then twenty-two, while there was yet hope that Venice might be saved out of the consequences of the huge mistake,—"raise up a nation of twenty-two millions at our doors! What! create in pure wantonness a rival in the hegemony of the races of Latin stock, who may well one day become a most formidable one! What! abandon for ever the long-cherished hope and phrase that the Mediterranean was, or should be, a French lake! Could any French ruler in his senses inaugurate a policy big with such disastrous results?" The accusations of the French senators against their

Emperor's prudence and foresight may have been just. They were unjust when directed against his intentions and purposes. And the mouthpiece who spoke for the Emperor to the nation was accordingly directed to assure the Senate that this unification of Italy had formed no part of the imperial policy; that, in fact, the Emperor had left no stone unturned to prevent it from accomplishing itself. Was that exculpatory assertion true? None but those who, from want of discrimination, are convinced that every statement made by Napoleon III. must needs be false, can doubt the exact truth of it. If Villafranca is forgotten or explained away, has Gaeta no memories? If the histories connected with those names do not speak with sufficient clearness, is not the record of Florence unmistakable and explicit enough? When Ricasoli was at the head of the Provisional Government of Tuscany, when the union of that province with Piedmont and with the rest of Italy had not yet been decided on by the inhabitants, the Emperor despatched envoy after envoy,—M. Reiset, Prince Joseph Poniatouski, and lastly, his cousin the Prince Napoleon,—charged to use their utmost endeavours to induce Tuscany to vote for its own autonymy under a ruler of its own, instead of aggregating itself to the rest of Italy. Had Florence then listened to the voice of the charmer, there would have been an end to the hopes and the fears which waited on the formation of the new kingdom. And the temptation so to listen was at that time great at Florence. For it may be most truly asserted that there was hardly a Florentine, from the prince in his ancestral palazzo to the crossing-sweeper in the street, who did not then feel persuaded that the conversion of Tuscany into a province, and of Florence into a provincial town, would greatly injure his own individual interests. But Ricasoli was immovably firm, and the Tuscan people were patriotic; for the all but unanimous vote for the aggregation of Tuscany to the rest of Italy was the true and genuine expression of real unselfish patriotism. Had that patriotism not existed, the formation of a great Italian nation would have remained a dream, the fears of the French senators would have been appeased, and the policy of the Emperor would have been justified.

Surely, then, in the face of all these facts, nothing can be a greater mistake than to talk of the unification of Italy as a work which the Emperor accomplished, and which, therefore, it may be assumed that he would not willingly destroy. The unification of Italy was effected in despite of the Emperor Napoleon's wishes and efforts. And it is perfectly reasonable to suppose that the undoing of what was so effected would be exactly what he would wish.

But has his past conduct with regard to this Roman question been such as would seem to be in accordance with the existence of such a wish? Those who have taken note of the unceasing difficulties with which the successive Italian governments have had to struggle, best

know how admirably well calculated is the maintenance of the temporal power to effect the object of pulling down the Italian throne and breaking up the nation once again into the fragments out of which it was constituted. No government can be otherwise than weak as long as that exhausting sore remains open. The country is rendered ungovernable, restless, incapable of giving its energies to those reforms and improvements which are so urgently needed. The small but unceasingly active republican party is kept alive; their hands are strengthened, and their game is played by the continuance of a condition of things which gives ample scope for appeal to all revolutionary passions. But if the maintenance of the temporal power of the Papacy was thus powerfully tending to preserve a state of things which gave promise of bringing about, sooner or later, that disruption of Italy which we are assuming the French Emperor to desire, why did he at last consent to withdraw his troops from Rome? Because by so doing he made a yet worse and more dangerous position for the Italian Government, while gaining a certain amount of very much needed political capital for himself. In fact, the position made by the Convention of the 15th September for the Italian Government was so utterly false and mischievous a one that it was foreseen from the first that it would be absolutely untenable. The Italian ministry of that day would probably have done better had they refused to accept the Grecian gift proffered to them. But the temptation of getting rid of the presence of French soldiers at Rome at any price was too great to be resisted. How little has been gained to Italy from the concession obtained at so great a cost the recent events have shown. But the sagacity of the Emperor,—always on the theory which we are supporting, that what he mainly wishes with regard to Italy is, that it should be split up again into fragments,—has been in this matter at least justified. The last fruits of the September Convention have gone nearer towards very seriously risking such a catastrophe than is perhaps generally known.

It is very generally believed in Italy by the adversaries of the party of action,—the moderates, and government men of different shades,—that had Garibaldi succeeded in seizing Rome, he would not have done so for the profit of the present Italian Government and the present Italian monarch;—that he would not have repeated on this occasion the self-sacrificing, or in any case the loyal rôle which he performed at Naples; but would have made his success a stepping-stone to the raising of the republican flag in the south. And it may perhaps be assumed that Garibaldi does not feel now towards the monarchy of the House of Savoy quite as he did at the time of his former exploit. Nevertheless, we are not disposed to believe that Garibaldi would have acted otherwise than as a loyal son of Italy as she is at present constituted. But we do believe that very serious danger would have existed, and that such a turn as has been indicated might have been

given to any revolutionary success. This, it is true, would not have been exactly what it can be supposed that the Emperor would have wished. A revolutionary movement in Italy on a scale of any importance would, it can hardly be doubted, involve very serious danger to the Imperial Government in France. And it is a danger to which the Emperor has ever shown himself peculiarly sensitive. The "proximus ardet Ucalegon" is a cry to which Cæsarism is rarely indifferent. The Emperor, therefore, did not wish or intend that Garibaldi should be allowed to achieve any success. But the necessity, in which his attempt would place the Italian Government, either to repress the movement by force of arms, or to look on while it was put down by French arms,—a dilemma of which either horn was about equally dangerous to the authority of the King's Government,—very satisfactorily played his game for him. And the final result of the September Convention is that the French troops are once again on Italian soil, while the King himself, and any possible government which it is open to the King to form, are in a very much worse position before the nation than they were before the Convention was signed.

So thoroughly and perfectly has this been felt to be the case, that the movement of the volunteers against Rome was very largely promoted and aided by the friends of the temporal power in Italy. Of course all such aid and complicity have been carefully concealed and loudly denied. But we have reason to feel very great confidence in the information we have received that such was the case to a very large extent. The "papalini," or Pope's friends, who are friends also, of course, to the other fallen dynasties of the peninsula, are in fact the only party in Italy who desire that the work which has made Italy a nation should be undone. The republicans, with the exception of a very small number of men,—quiet philosophers for the most part, who dream of a federation of republics after the fashion of Switzerland,—the republicans, though anxious to overthrow the throne, yet wish to maintain the unity of Italy. The union, therefore, of the "red" and "black" forces on this occasion has been a remarkable instance of the way in which men who differ toto cœlo as to their ultimate designs, will yet suffer a common hatred to group them together under the same banner for a design not the ultimate one.

It is extremely probable that Garibaldi, if asked the question, would emphatically deny that he or his had received any aid or support from the "black" party in the peninsula. And if he were to make such denial, we for our parts should place the most implicit trust in the good faith of his assertion. But those who know Italy, and the way in which such matters are managed there,—and specially those who add to this knowledge a knowledge of the man Garibaldi,—would not be one whit the less disposed to believe that the fact has been as above stated. And it is the fact, as the Italian Government well know, that these underhand machinations of the "black party,"—priest party, or retro-

grade party, by whatever name it may be called,—throughout Italy, as well as in Rome and in France, gave to the recent Garibaldian movement its most dangerous aspect, and still constitutes the gravest peril which Italy has to fear. For these men do unquestionably aim at the overthrow of the monarchy and the restoration of the old state of things in Italy. The republicans, or at all events the far greater number of them, including, as we firmly believe, Garibaldi himself, are in a great measure held in check by the fear that the fall of the monarchy might lead to the dismemberment of Italy. They would fain substitute a republic for the monarchy; but they would preserve, at all events, the unity of Italy. Their recent allies, "the blacks," are restrained by no such considerations.

But then, it may be asked, why should not the Emperor, if he also wishes the dismemberment of Italy, have permitted the work of Garibaldi and the black party to have gone on unmolested by him? Because he knows full well that, whatever assistance the retrogrades may have given to the movement party for their own ends, success, if it had been attained, would have been wholly to the profit of the "reds." The dismemberment, which he would fain see, could be reached not only through revolution, but by the prevalence of purely revolutionary ideas and principles. And this would of course by no means suit the imperial views. There is no chance of a dismemberment of Italy on "block" principles. The retrogrades in Italy are dangerous as a disturbing element; dangerous as assisting to bring about a condition of things which may form the pretext for French intervention; and most dangerous of all when they ally themselves with other disturbing forces tending to wholly different issues. But it may be assumed, we think, as certain that they will never succeed in re-establishing their Pope-king in the provinces which he has already lost.

But they are fanatics; and there is nothing surprising, therefore, in their entertaining any amount of delusive hope and expectation. But is the Emperor a fanatic? Whatever else he may be imagined to be by the different theorisers as to his character and conduct, it will hardly be supposed that Napoleon III. is a religious fanatic. It is true that the Italians, in speculating on the line of conduct which he has held, and may be expected to hold, never forget, as an element in their calculations, that he has a wife who is supposed to be a fanatic. But whether or no the necessity for pleasing her may enter into the motives of his conduct as regards the Roman question, it is certain that the necessity of pleasing, or at least of not outraging, the convictions and prejudices of a large and extremely powerful section of his subjects, has a foremost place among the considerations by which his policy must be supposed to be guided. For the "black" party,—the priest, conservative, ultramontane, anti-1792 party,—is very much stronger in France than in Italy. And as regards Italian affairs, its

sentiments and opinions are animated not only by all those considerations in which the retrogrades in Italy would perfectly sympathise, but also by the bitter jealousy and hostility against Italian nationality on the grounds which have been pointed out above. Even if it should be clear to the Emperor that there is now no longer any hope of dismembering Italy into a number of small states in each of which French influence should be supreme, it is still absolutely necessary for the Emperor to avoid altogether alienating this section of his people,—necessary more than ever at a moment when he has succeeded in alienating so many other classes of his subjects. On the other hand, he has insured the bitter and abiding hatred of the Italian people, and he has run a risk of lighting up the flames of revolution in Italy. The latter danger has, perhaps, seemed to him to be balanced by the advantage it would offer him in affording an opportunity for interfering to extinguish them.

But there was quite enough in the situation to make it probable,—as is believed in Italy, and as the Emperor's more than ever darkly oracular sayings to Signor Nigra would seem to indicate,—that Napoleon hesitated as to the course he should pursue in the face of Garibaldi's raid into the Pontifical territory. And in estimating the conduct of Ratazzi, attacked as it has been with all that acrimony and violence which unhappily characterise Italian political differences, it should be remembered that such hesitation on the part of the Emperor would be a very strong reason, if not altogether a justification, for hesitation on the part of the Italian Government. There seems to be no doubt that all parties in Italy, the King, Signor Ratazzi, and the other ministers, the people and the Garibaldians, all had been led into the notion that they would be permitted to play the same game over again which they were allowed to play when Italy succeeded in getting possession of Emilia, the march of Ancona and Umbria; that when the deed was done,—when the Pope should have been dethroned, and Rome with its territory in the possession of Italian troops,—the Emperor would have said, "God bless me! who would have thought it? Well, now it is a 'fait accompli,' and cannot be helped!" But very suddenly the conviction was brought home to the Italian King and his ministers, that no such game was to be permitted,—that the Emperor was in right earnest determined to put down the attempt of Garibaldi by armed force,—and that unless they,—the King and the Government,—very quickly and decidedly made it manifest to all men that they had neither act nor part in the Garibaldian enterprise, but were, on the contrary, thoroughly minded to control and suppress it, they,—the Italian King and Government,—would be treated in the manner in which it had become necessary to treat Garibaldi. Thereupon it behoved them, the King and the Government, to turn about with the most painful and humiliating suddenness. Signor Ratazzi went out of office,—a

happy resource in trouble which is denied to captains of sinking ships, and to kings. The King had to remain and bear the brunt of all the obloquy to which the circumstances so unavoidably exposed him. Every shadow of the popularity which once encircled him has departed from him. It would be difficult to find in history a more vilipended monarch than the once adored re galantuomo! There is no sort of vile treachery of which he is not accused. If it were of any use, or indeed in any way fitting, to fill pages with the most detailed and positive accounts of the King's treason to the national cause, but which nevertheless rest only on the unproved assertions of persons more or less worthy of credit, it would be easy to do so. But the accusations which are brought against the King for the conduct which he certainly did pursue limit themselves to this,—that he suddenly changed his course, that he executed a volte face at the imperious bidding of the Emperor. What else could he do? Fight France, and die in leading a charge against the French bayonets, say the red party, and many others, who have never belonged to that party. Yes! That is not so very difficult a thing to do, not so difficult perhaps as to occupy the position, with all its accompaniments, which Victor Emmanuel is now occupying! Garibaldi was abundantly ready to fight France, and to die leading his men up to the French Chassepots. But even Garibaldi had to take some account of the lives which would have been sacrificed with his own, when it became clear even to him that the sacrifice would be of no avail. And Garibaldi has for his reward the reproach of "marplot" thrown in his teeth by nearly all Europe. And a king has other considerations to think of besides those of which even a guerilla chief has to take count.

Seriously, was it the duty of the King to rush into a war with France, rather than submit to occupy the hideously painful position which circumstances and the French Emperor have made for him? We cannot think that any of those who have ever taken a share in the bearing of the responsibilities of directing the course and conduct of a nation will answer in the affirmative.

One thing, however, seems at least to be clear. If King Victor Emmanuel have any of the ordinary feelings of an honourable man,—if he be not utterly lost to every sentiment of the kind which makes an honoured name dear to a man, and the reverse intolerable, he must hate the Emperor of the French with a bitterness that only can be felt against the man who has robbed one of all that is dearest and best in life.

There is one portion of the King's conduct of which it is desirable to say a word before quitting this part of the subject,—a portion of his conduct which, according to our insular notions, would simply deserve the loss of his head; but for which, even in the midst of the storm of abuse which has been directed against him, nobody in Italy thinks of

blaming him. He carried on negotiations with the Emperor "out of his own head," as the schoolboy says, without the intervention or co-operation of any minister. One would imagine that the result of his operations in this line must have convinced him by this time of the superior advantages of the constitutional method, if kings were capable of conversion or conviction upon that point. But it is at all events a very discouraging symptom of the constitutional capabilities of the Italians, that these considerations should suggest themselves to no Italian.

As for Ratazzi, he was most unquestionably guilty of the vacillation of which his countrymen so loudly accuse him. He arrested and imprisoned Garibaldi,—in the prison of his own island home;—and he let him escape, a first and second time; he allowed him to come to Florence, and address the people publicly in a conspicuous locality of the city; and he allowed him to depart on his way to lead the volunteers against Rome by a special train, openly commanded for his service. There is reason, too, to believe that he also secretly assisted him with public money;—playing over again the game he had seen so successfully played by the master hand of Cavour. But the game was played. And all went wrong. The vacillations of the Emperor, if it is true, as seems probable, that he did vacillate, do certainly go far to excuse those of the Italian minister, who had to play his game in subordination to the momentarily shifting expressions of the imperial countenance. But there does seem some reason to think that a larger infusion of audacity into the Italian minister's play might have won the game. Had Garibaldi been counselled, on getting away from Caprera, to make straight for Rome, instead of perpetrating the useless and compromising folly of coming to make speeches at Florence; and had Ratazzi, taking advantage of the excuse afforded him by Garibaldi's evasion, instantly proceeded to occupy Civita Vecchia with a strong force before the French transports had left Hyères, would the Emperor then have risked a collision between the Italian troops and his own? Would he have sent his transport ships to Civita Vecchia at all? Many of those best qualified to form an opinion in Italy think that he would not have ventured to do so. And we are disposed to agree with them in their mode of thinking. It must not be forgotten, however, that it has been very loudly asserted, and is believed by many people in Italy, that the merit or demerit of having declined to commit Italy to a struggle with France, when it became certain that only by engaging in such a struggle, and coming out from it successfully, could the national aspirations for the possession of Rome be gratified, is due to the King. It is needless to say that those who maintain that this was the case do not deem it other than a crushing and indelible disgrace that the King should have so acted. It is asserted that Ratazzi would have embarked in such a struggle, and was prevented from doing so only by the refusal of the

King. It will probably be known with some degree of certainty, ere long, whether this was the case or not. If it be true that the minister went out upon this issue, it is still open to the King to say, "The minister who accepted the responsibility of carrying on the government in accordance with my view of the necessities of the case was a soldier, and one of experience and high reputation. The minister who differed from me, and who would have committed the nation to a war, was a civilian wholly incompetent to estimate the probabilities of the issue of the course he recommended." And though the aristocratic and anti-progressive characteristics of General Menabrea's antecedents, and his consequent unpopularity, will avail to prevent any such argument from sufficing to diminish the load of odium which now rests on Victor Emmanuel, it may be addressed, perhaps, to the tribunal of European public opinion with better effect. For General Menabrea is not only notoriously a soldier well skilled in the art he professes, but also an upright and honourable man.

But the game has been played and lost! There is but little comfort in talking of what might have been done. What was performed was a wretched farce, with a finale of very sad tragedy. But it is at least something to know that those poor Garibaldian boys, hungry, ill clothed, and worse armed, did fight well and bravely for the cause they went from their homes to support, being induced thereto really and solely by their love for their country and great desire to obtain what they deemed to be necessary to its welfare. Let what will be said to the contrary, our readers may be assured that this is true. Garibaldi's volunteers fought with desperate bravery against disadvantages which more practised soldiers would have known must render all fighting hopeless. Does not the bag which General de Failly was able to make by the aid of the Chassepot rifle show as much? Six hundred Garibaldians slain, with wounded in proportion! Really a most gratifying report. And with the loss of ONLY TWO of our own men! Well may the successful general say, in the honest exultation of his heart in the hour of victory, "Our Chassepot rifles have done wonders!" Wonders indeed! But General de Failly has in his own person performed a wonder greater still, which he is, it may well be believed, the first who has ever achieved. He has sent home to France a report of the success of French arms of which Frenchmen are ashamed. Well may M. Forcade say, with reference to the publication of this report, so glorious for the French arms, that "the editing of the 'Moniteur' is conducted either with little good taste or with great negligence."

But this episode of the Roman question is now over. It will not be soon forgotten. But it is over. Garibaldi is at Varignano, "very silent and sad;" and Florentine sympathisers are striving to provide, no longer powder and rifles, but lint, splints, and plasters. The curtain may be considered to have definitely dropped on that act of

the drama; and a new and different set of actors are to appear on the scene. We have already stated our opinion, in contradiction to so valuable a one as that of M. Forcade, that these actors will be few. And every day that passes seems to render it more improbable that the statesmen of Europe will assemble at the invitation of the Emperor. The official prints in France, making the best of a sufficiently bad matter, proclaim exultingly that as yet there have been no refusals. But there seems reason to doubt whether even this is strictly true. And it does not appear, from the reply of Count Bismarck, that Prussia,—perhaps, under the circumstances, the most important member of the proposed conference,—is at all more well-disposed than might have been expected to lend a gratuitous hand to help the French Emperor out of his trouble.

What is the prospect, then, before us? The probability is, that France and Italy,—that is, the constituted governments of those two nations,—will be left to find the "solution" of the question between them. It is the business of diplomatists to find "solutions." And they are supposed to be constantly doing it. But it is curious to consider how very rarely diplomatic labours have been able to "solve" any great question affecting the march of the world;—how very rarely any such question has been capable of solution by such means. Questions of this nature have to be left to be solved by other less immediate and less apparent forces. And we may be allowed, perhaps, to draw whatever of consolation the disastrous nature of the present circumstances is capable of affording from the consideration that in this respect this miserable Roman question much resembles the other questions which have vexed humanity in its march onwards. The Roman question will be effectually solved by the irresistible force of time and the onward rolling of human affairs. Solvitur ambulando may in this matter also be confidently answered to all curious inquirers into the future. The end of the Pope's course will be reached, and that at no very distant day, simply by allowing him to proceed on it. But, in the meantime, it is necessary that diplomacy should do its work, and at least attempt to apply to the course of events whatever of controlling direction it may be in its power to contribute. Of what nature are their efforts in this sort likely to be? It is rumoured, indeed, that notwithstanding the talk about a conference, the Italian and French Governments have already come to some degree of understanding as to the course they mean to pursue in this matter. And one patent fact has already emerged out of the ocean of rumours, suppositions, and speculations which would seem to have a bearing on the nature of the "solution" which these governments are said to be preparing for us.

The Italian Government is rapidly calling out soldiery.

In the face of financial embarrassments of the gravest and most urgent character, the new ministers of Victor Emmanuel are largely

increasing the active force of the Italian army. Is this alarmingly ominous phenomenon really symptomatic of the nature of the arrangement to be proposed to Italy to be made between her and the Pope? But what else can be supposed? For what purpose can it be necessary thus to plunge Italy yet deeper in the slough of debt and ruin, if it be not to strengthen the hands of the Government against its own people? With what other foe does Italy propose to go to war? To what purpose are these troops destined? For what other imaginable object can this be done than that of quelling all possible resistance on the part of the nation when the terms on which it is proposed to settle the relations of Italy and the Pope shall be made known, and shall be found to be such as will be intolerable to the Italian people?

There are still worse rumours in the air,—mere whispers as yet; but they are whispered by those whose whisperings best deserve to be listened to. We all remember the much talk of a secret article appended to the Convention of the 15th of September. It is said that this article has a real existence, and has reference to a further cession of territory by Italy to France. It is said that the time has now come when the agreement embodied in this article is to be openly declared and acted upon. It is said that the contemplated cession would give to France a very large slice of the ancient kingdom of Piedmont, together with several of the most important, and, in a military point of view, invaluable passes of the Alps.

If in reality there exist any intention of acting upon the provisions of any such article or agreement, then assuredly General Menabrea is acting prudently in providing himself beforehand with an amount of brute force sufficient to crush the nation he has been called to rule. But despite the difficulty of supposing such persons as are convinced of the truth of these intentions to be in error, we do not believe that King Victor Emmanuel and his ministers contemplate any measure of the kind. We find it difficult to believe that the Emperor Napoleon would, at the present juncture, venture on so flagitious an act of high-handed, lawless wrong-doing. We are well aware of the infinite importance to him of finding some sop or other to soothe the discontent and wounded vanity of his subjects. We know how vitally essential to his own position and safety it is that some such offering should be provided. We are perfectly well aware that nothing could be more grateful to the French nation in general, and especially to those classes of it which it is most important to him to conciliate, than such a spoliation of the kingdom of Italy, and such an acquisition by that of France. But, for all that, we do not think that the Emperor would venture on running the risk,—the twofold risk,—of throwing Italy into the arms of Prussia on the one hand, or of lighting up a flame of revolution and anarchic violence from the foot of the Alps to the Sicilian Sea on the other. It seems to us impossible that the consequences of such an attempt should be other than

these; and equally impossible that the Emperor should not know as much perfectly well. As to the Italian parties to such a scheme, surely no depth of dishonour and infamy would be deep enough for such treason and pusillanimity combined. As for King Victor Emmanuel, we have said that, whatever his faults may be, we do not hold it to have been proved that he has ever forfeited the character of a sovereign loyal to his country. Of General Menabrea we have said that he has always borne the character of an upright, honourable man. How can we conceive it possible that either of these men would lend themselves to the perpetration of a deed which would cover their names with such a storm of odium, obloquy, and infamy as has rarely overwhelmed either king or minister? Of course it is not in the legal power of any king or any ministers to bargain away a portion of the kingdom they are called to govern by a secret article in such hugger-mugger fashion. Of course all that the government of the King could undertake, by any such treaty or article, to do, would be to submit the propositions to the consideration of parliament. And of course there would not be the remotest chance of causing any such measure to pass any conceivable Italian Chamber of Deputies. But if it had been determined to commit the crime in question, recourse would necessarily be had to a suspension of parliamentary action, after the Chambers had been cajoled, as before has been done, into the suicidal granting of "full powers" to the ministry of the day. But the game would be too dangerous a one; and we repeat that, in a word, this suspicion seems to us incredible.

But the remaining hypothesis that the Italian Government is providing itself with troops for the coercion of the nation, because it is conscious that the terms to be announced as constituting the basis on which the Italian nation and the Pope are to stand towards each other for the future will be extremely unwelcome to the people,—this hypothesis does not unhappily seem to us to be so improbable. In fact, no conceivable terms to which there would be the remotest chance of inducing the Papal Court, or even the French Emperor, to accede, would be otherwise than grievously unpalatable to Italy. And though it is exceedingly lamentable that a nation which has aspired to the high dignity and advantage of self-government should be placed by the violence of its popular prejudices and passions under the necessity of submitting to the restraint of force, instead of to that of reason, it must be admitted that the Italians are somewhat less than reasonable in the demands they make on their Government with reference to the Papacy. The only "arrangement" which it would be agreeable to Italy to make with the Pontiff would be that he should arrange to make away with himself. They desire the abolition of the Papacy on many grounds, which are in the highest degree rational, and in which all those well-wishers to humanity, who best know what the Papacy is, especially in its own home, would and do

cordially agree with them. But they also desire it on other grounds which are not reasonable. And it cannot be denied that the latter are the class of motives which most potently excite the national mind, which have conducted the volunteers to Rome, and which make Italy all but ungovernable as long as the popular excitement upon the subject shall last.

They are most impatiently desirous that the Pope should be pulled down from his place, because they want to get into it. It may be confidently asserted, we are afraid, that the strongest and most active motive which is urging the Italians towards Rome is not the conviction that the Papal Court is an engine of horrible oppression to its own subjects, and a very mischievously bad neighbour to their own civil administration, nor merely the wish to complete the national unity by abolishing the distinctions which separate the bit of ground under priestly rule from the surrounding provinces, but the longing desire to make Rome the capital of Italy. It is not quite easy to make those who have not an intimate acquaintance with Italian people and with Italian history understand the violence, the nature, and the meaning of this strong desire. We all feel the poetry and the magic of the magni nominis umbra,—Eternal Rome. We can appreciate and sympathise with the feelings called into play by the mighty associations and memories which that name evokes. We can understand the poetical side of the question, and the notion engendered by it in the hearts of an emotional and unpractical people, that to make Italy again occupy the place she once held among the nations, it needs but that she should once again have her national existence in the spot whence decrees have been for so many centuries issued orbi et urbi. But this is only one, and that the least prominent and powerful, of the feelings that make the Italians intensely anxious to have Rome for their capital. It is unhappily the recrudescence and outcropping of the old internecine mediæval jealousies between one municipality and its neighbours and rivals. Turin cannot endure that Florence should be promoted to the high rank of capital, while itself is reduced to the position of a provincial city. Naples will not tolerate the superiority of any community of which it has always not unreasonably considered itself at least the equal. The "I am as good as you" feeling is equally strong in many another fair and once sovereign city. Even the scores of municipalities of the second class will not willingly see Florence, formerly their rival,—and in the case of many of them an upstart rival, once looked down on by them from the height of their own earlier secured power,—thus promoted over their heads. And this is in reality the sentiment which gives its chief intensity to the cry of "Rome for the capital of Italy!" All these ancient rivals and enemies would bow to the majesty of that name, —all the more readily that it is but a name.

That the magic abiding in that mighty name is in truth the only

title which Rome will have to become the capital of Italy,—that very many practical considerations of the gravest nature go to show that it is specially ill adapted for any such destiny,—that Florence, on the other hand, is pointed out by every practical consideration of position, whether regarded from an administrative or strategetical point of view, of satisfactory sanitary conditions, of intellectual culture, of traditional character, and of special local conveniency, as the most eminently fitted to be the definitive capital of Italy, cannot now be insisted on at length, for the space at our command has been already exhausted, and the argument is a long one. We will abstain, therefore, from touching it any further than to mention the very pregnant fact that it is within our knowledge that it was the opinion of Cavour that Florence ought eventually to become the Italian capital.

But from the reasons which have been thus briefly referred to, this question of the capital has the effect of exasperating and exacerbating Italian minds on the subject of the arrangement to be made with Rome, to a degree which may furnish quite a sufficient explanation of the necessity felt by the present ministry for providing an adequate amount of force to put down any overt resistance to intentions, in respect to the Papal question, which they may be conscious will be likely to excite popular discontent. If these intentions, be they what they may, are to be, as we must hope and suppose, duly ratified by parliament, it is not otherwise than right that sufficient force should be at hand to support the law. Let us hope,—as we do for our own parts fully hope and believe,—that the present armament, most deplorable as it is in any case in a financial point of view, may have no other object. We hold it to be a chimerical hope that the Papacy can be altogether overthrown just yet. The human race must wait for this, one of its best hopes, yet a little longer. The time will come. It is admitted on all hands that Rome cannot become Victor Emmanuel's capital while the Pope, even though he were shorn of his temporal power, makes that city the spiritual capital of the Catholic world. And if the arrangement now to be made with the Papal Court be, as it can hardly be doubted that it will and must be, of a kind to preserve such an amount of dignity, and at least of sovereign seeming, to the Pontiff as will render it impossible for Rome to be made the civil capital of Italy, some consolation may be found, if not for Italy herself in the first moments of her disappointment, at least for the more coolly-judging well-wishers to Italy, in the resulting fact that she will thus be forced into maintaining a far more desirable capital.

THE UNCONTROLLED RUFFIANISM OF LONDON,

AS MEASURED BY THE RULE OF THUMB.

Our attention has been specially called to the subject above named by the fact that, after a somewhat prolonged and minute inquiry, we have been unable to meet with any one who has been garrotted; and that subsequently, finding ourselves unable to approach the subject in the first degree, we have not even succeeded in coming upon any man, woman, or child who has known any one that has been so maltreated. Then, having failed in this, which we may perhaps call a matter of magnitude, our attention has fixed itself upon a much smaller thing, and we have examined our own experience as to—pickpocketing. We ourselves have never had our pockets picked! The classical and observant reader will, no doubt, quote against us that well-worked Latin line,—"Cantabit vacuus," &c. But we do carry a watch, plainly indicated by the dangling of a chain; and never yet has sacrilegious hand been laid on that trinket in any of our not unfrequent wanderings through the streets, either by day or night. And following up our inquiries still further, we have found but few sufferers from this certainly not uncommon vice, who are personally known to us. Our maiden aunt lost her silver snuff-box in an omnibus, and the wife of our bosom opines that her handkerchief was once taken from her as she was extricating herself from the thraldom of a cab. To us, who know the habits of the latter lady, it seems unjust that this case should be allowed to swell the list of crimes which are recorded against the population of our metropolis. We always thought that that handkerchief had been left upon the cab-seat. Among our male acquaintance we can find hardly one who will acknowledge that within the last five years he has become a victim to the skill supposed to have been so widely taught in Professor Fagin's establishment. We own at once that we began this inquiry in a spirit differing greatly from that which now animates us. Having heard and read much of the predatory habits of our immediate neighbours, and of the rowdyism, barbarity, and what we have ventured to call the uncontrolled ruffianism, of those among whom we live,—and who is there that does not hear and read so much on the subject as to make the hair of the head stand on end from time to time?—we went somewhat deeply into the statistics of the metropolitan criminal population, intending to harrow up the very souls of our readers by such a de-

scription of the dangers to which they were daily subjected as would, at any rate, have entitled us to the merit of having produced a first-rate sensational article. But when we came to the digestion of these statistics,—for which process we acknowledge that the digesting materials bestowed upon us are hardly sufficiently strong and trustworthy,—we found ourselves wandering in a wilderness of facts which required a great many more facts to make themselves in the least useful. What did 4,738 pocket-handkerchiefs a year mean? Our imagination tells us at once that such a mass of silk and cambric brought to the repository of Professor Fagin must, to him and his, have been sufficient proof of a very lively trade;—that there was enough here, joined with the 598 watches and other articles enumerated, to fill the repositories of many other professors. But then came the question of population and the work of comparison. Those who had talked so much and had written so much of uncontrolled ruffianism, had intended to signify to us that ruffianism among us is more uncontrolled now than formerly,—is more uncontrolled among us than among others,—French shall we say, and Americans,—whom we regard as walking along with us, pari passu, on the road towards perfected civilisation, but whom we should most unwillingly acknowledge to be in advance of us. We found ourselves, as we say, in a wilderness, when we came to sift the matter after this fashion, and to digest the statistics with which we had surrounded ourselves. A certain number of persons had been garrotted annually in London during the past eight years. We decline to state the number on which we alighted. Not intending, in this essay, to work on statistical principles, we will not subject ourselves to the annoyance of having our statistics questioned. But the percentage on the population of London was very small indeed,—so small that when we came to add garrotting to the other crimes of the citizens, it showed a result hardly to be appreciated. Surely it could not be necessary for everybody to stay at home o' nights, or to walk always in the middle of the streets, to avoid a danger that was so minutely infinitesimal! And on comparing our present selves with our past selves, it seemed to us that garrotting had come up in place of other offences of violence,—indicating, by its nature, fear of the police, and therefore an efficient police, rather than an increase of uncontrolled villany. That there should be villany among three millions of people herded together, we take to be a matter of course. Whether there was an increased percentage of villany, and an increased percentage of the want of control;—that was the question; and finding our digestive organs weak for the manipulation of pure statistics, which require a good deal of chucking backwards and forwards, we acknowledge that we gave up the idea of exhaustive instruction to the public in that form.

As to the comparison between ourselves and our neighbours in the matter of uncontrolled ruffianism,—between ourselves and the

French or the Americans,—we again found ourselves involved in similar difficulties. To make any comparison of avail we should take the cities of Paris and New York, and ascertain whether in them life and property are less safe than in London. No other cities can afford ground for such comparison,—even if such is given by Paris and New York,—for the scoundrelism of the earth will of course gather itself together where wealth and numbers offer it the best chance of a livelihood. In the little town of Muzzlegoose on the Downs, with which we are connected, street violence is unknown, although a Muzzlegoose butcher was hung some years back for sticking his knife into a young woman who would not become his sweetheart. When we were in the thick of these inquiries there came to be that ill-timed march of militiamen through the north of London, and they who are loudest in pointing out to us that we have fallen upon bad and violent times had a great deal to say about that. The roughs seem to have had a day of it, and though we again could not find any personal acquaintance who had materially suffered, no doubt a great many ruffians had been enabled to come together, and to set the police for a time at defiance. But it occurred to us that even within our own time there had been rows of a much worse description both in Paris and in New York;—rows which must have gone much further in making the timid portion of the population afraid to walk abroad. Nor did it seem to us to alter the case that these French and American rows had formed themselves on a basis of political feeling. We thought, indeed, that it was the same with us,—only that here the political feeling of the people is so much less obdurate, less hostile, less unconvinced, less spasmodically successful;—and on that account so much more malleable and easily governed than it is in Paris or New York! And, moreover, if your head be broken, or your purse stolen, it matters little to you whether the injury came from uncontrolled political, or uncontrolled non-political, ruffianism. What does matter is that the ruffianism should be brought under control; and it seems to us that that which is non-political is more easily handled, is more manifestly made odious to the eyes of the multitude, is more quickly made to appear as a thing clearly damnable and injurious to all concerned in it, than that which strives to make itself respectable with the excuse of politics.

But we will confess that all that had been said of the insecurity of London had made us fear that we could not hold up our heads in this matter of police control against our French neighbours. Of the rowdyism of New York we have always entertained so strong a conviction, that we have never feared a comparison there; but was it the fact that Paris was more orderly than London? Statistics appeared from time to time which seemed to show that, at any rate, as regards England and France, and therefore, doubtless, as regards London and Paris also, serious criminality was much more prevalent with us than

with them. This was very terrible to us, and seemed to go so far towards proving the correctness of that sensational but uncomfortable view of the matter, which would teach us to believe that we English are all gradually tumbling into a great Golgotha of crime, in which the innocent will be eaten up and swallowed by the criminals. We were almost in despair on this matter, when there came out a most startling but comfortable article in the Pall Mall Gazette,—see the paper of 28th November last,—laden with statistics, all of which show conclusively, if statistics can ever be conclusive, that we are at any rate not worse than our neighbours. And there is here also a direct comparison between London and Paris. In London the summary convictions in a year were 58,849, as placed against 85,690 in Paris, with probably nearly a third less of population. In London, indeed, the convictions for drunkenness and disorderly conduct exceeded those in Paris for similar offences by nearly five to one. This is very bad, and should be looked to. But we are inclined to think that the men and women taken up for being drunk do more harm to themselves than to their neighbours.

Finding ourselves thus somewhat bewildered by the statistics which we had collected on the subject, and thinking that, as far as we understood them, or could, as we say, digest them, they tended rather to show us how quiet and safe our streets are than the reverse, we resolved upon applying ourselves to that rule of thumb which we have attempted to explain in the opening lines of this short essay. We had been told that we ought to stir no whither after nightfall in the streets of London without carrying with us, at the least, a huge knobstick wherewith to assail, on the instant, any garrotter by whom we might be attacked;—whereas it is our custom and our comfort to be accompanied by a somewhat soft and ancient umbrella, which we love well. Moreover, though we do not know that we are lacking in proper manly vigour, we doubt our own alacrity with that knobstick. And as for a revolver, which has been suggested, we are free to acknowledge that the danger of being garrotted, if it were assured to us, would loom less to us than that which we should anticipate from walking about with a loaded pistol in our own pockets. They who take delight in wandering about through strange lands, among lions, savages, and nomadic thieving tribes, whose business it is to go hither and thither with their lives in their hands,—they may look upon the proposed state of constant preparation under arms as one of pleasurable excitement; but for us, who are accustomed to regard the security of our pockets and persons as an affair of the police,—to us such suggestions are more terrible than the evils supposed to be so general. If that be necessary, then,—for us,—farewell London! And it has been very generally pointed out to us, that if we do venture out at nights, we should walk over in the middle of the streets, as far as may be from skulking corners, and that we should walk quick and

watchful, remembering ever that we are in the midst of rampant, uncontrolled ruffianism. As we thought of these plain, and certainly cheap instructions, it appeared to us that we were too old to alter habits long adopted. On an occasion or two we might remember to rush down the centre of Great Russell Street as we made our way home Bloomsbury-wards, returning from the mild dissipation of our club. But it is our wont to saunter listlessly along, thinking of the Magazine, thinking of our articles, thinking often of an ungrateful,—sometimes, too, of a grateful public. The streets which are very pleasant to us would cease to give us pleasure if it became needful for us to be ever on our guard,—to hurry along, looking over our shoulders to the right and to the left, mindful always of the cudgel in our hands. And then, too, as to that proposal that we should carry with us, in these our night-rambles, no watch and no money, we demur to it altogether. Our wants are not heavy, but we like to go prepared for the perhaps necessary cab,—for the little supper arrangement which may, perchance, be suggested to us,—for that loan of half-a-crown which it is possible that our friend may require of us. We decline altogether to denude ourselves of our slightly-stocked purse, and will even continue to carry with us the means of knowing at what hour we insert our latch-key in the lock, so that feminine vigilance,—ever watchful on our behoof,—may not find us without an answer in the morning.

Thus, in doubt and suffering, we applied ourselves to what we will call the rule of thumb, and made personal inquiry as to the damages which had accrued to those whom we could approach at first, at second, or even at third hand. The result has been to assure us that we need not look for the knobstick, and that we may go mooning along the pavements,—as we have done every day for the last thirty years. And we venture to think that, after all, this mode of inquiry is the most efficacious for those who want to bring home a truth to themselves for their own guidance and conduct in life. Statistics must, as we have said, be knocked hither and thither, and sifted, and pulled to pieces, and digested, before a plain man can use them for his private purposes. A Chancellor of the Exchequer can regulate the expenses of the nation by statistics, but the gentleman who has two hundred and fifty pounds per annum for the maintenance of himself and family will find that he can stretch his money much further by the rule of thumb, well administered, than he can do by the use of any statistics. And then, too, the public statements, which meet us loudly in the newspapers from time to time, cautioning us against this horror and against that, are apt to delude us much if we accept them without the necessary grain of salt. If all these cautions were taken by the letter, in whom or in what could we trust? Is not every justice a nincompoop? Is not every man in office either a knave or an idler? Are not our clergy a poor, weak

set of drivellers? Are not our tradesmen pilferers, our merchants swindlers, our doctors quacks, our scholars shallow, and our servants slatternly hirelings? Alas! we know that, in the general, such is the case,—guided to that knowledge by the oft-repeated cautions of our daily and weekly monitors. But for ourselves, when we proceed to administer that rule of thumb,—when we come to judge of the neighbouring magistrate who is so kind to us; of the Post Office clerk who is our friend; of the dear vicar who lives near us, and whom we almost adore; of that excellent fellow, Brisket, who has never refused us credit in our sorest need; of our great and beneficent neighbour from the Lombard Street firm who gives coals in winter to all the paupers around us; of the hard-worked practitioner who feels our pulses at a most moderate pecuniary remuneration; of our young cousin who has just been elected a fellow; and of the neat, light-handed Phillis who waits upon us so deftly,—for ourselves, we say, when we thus measure our own little world by gauge of thumb, we find that we are surrounded by an extremely honest set of fellows.

Having, therefore, after our own fashion, measured the ruffianism of London in our own scales, and by our own weights, we decline to recognise any necessity for altering our usual mode of living. And even though we were throttled in consequence in the course of the coming winter, we do not think that our readers should accept that as any evidence that our observations are unfounded.

BUSINESS AT THE PRESENT DAY.

It is hardly too much to say that even the least observant readers of the daily papers must be aware of a great change which has of late years come over the commerce of this country. That all those who have noted this fact should be able to tell why, wherefore, and in what measure it has been brought about, would be absurd to expect; but that there has been a falling off in the character of our trading relations amongst ourselves, that abroad our credit and our great name for business integrity are not what they were, and still less what they ought to be, few who mix with their fellow men, and are even ordinarily quick to observe passing events, can have failed to remark. Indeed, has not the truth, in one respect, been brought home to most of us? How many families in the land are there who have not—either in their own persons or in those of their near relatives—suffered more or less from the mania, which was so prevalent for a time, of investing money in joint-stock company undertakings? Such speculations are in every sense of the word commercial, and the collapse of so many hundreds of them was nothing more than the result of the general recklessness in business which has latterly in another way so completely paralysed the trade of England. Of the fact that commerce is for the time paralysed, what stronger confirmation do we need than the City articles of the Times, the Daily News, or any other of the leading journals of London, Manchester, or the other great commercial towns of the kingdom? Money was never more plentiful than at the present day. The banks cry aloud for customers to borrow their thousands, tens of thousands, and millions, at two per cent. All that they ask is to receive fair commercial securities, and their wealth is at the disposition of those who will take it, to work with,—to manipulate, to turn over, to increase twenty, thirty, or fiftyfold. But the difficulty is to find those "fair commercial securities." When there is little or no trade, there are few or no good bills of exchange floating; and where such do not exist there must be a stand-still in business, an utter want of the lawful enterprise which is needful to develop the commerce of a country. But still the question remains to be answered, what has caused such an utter—and what is more important, such a very prolonged—stagnation in the trade of England; and when, if ever, is such a state of things likely to end?

The commercial business of this country may be divided under two principal heads—that of Trade and that of Finance. For our present

inquiry we will examine these separately, taking first all that which comes under the head of Trade—the business and calling of merchants; and afterwards, what may be denominated Finance, or that which applies to all purely monetary transactions, and in which are included banking operations, joint-stock company speculations, or the like.

And, first, as to Trade. What has caused the total prostration of this branch of commerce? what has occasioned its prolonged depression, lengthened on from week to week and from month to month, far beyond what in former days was caused by even the most severe commercial crisis? The reply to this question may be condensed in the words with which we have headed this paper, "business at the present day." It is the business of the present day, or rather the mode by which that business is conducted, which has caused all the evils under which trade is at present suffering; and until the system which we shall presently try to illustrate shall have ceased to exist, there can be little or no hopes that prosperity, which in business is the eldest child of credit, will ever return to mercantile England.

In former times—in days when men now barely of middle age were already fighting the battle of life—if you wished to be a merchant,—to commence business,—it was deemed essential that you should have not only some commercial training, but that you should be possessed of capital more or less adequate to the wants of the commerce in which you were about to engage. We remember the period—not more than twenty-five years ago—when a young man who had served his five or seven years in a mercantile house, and who could command a capital of five or six thousand pounds, would have been thought foolhardy to begin business on his own account, except in a very small way, and that chiefly on commission, in which the risks of loss are comparatively small. In those days, for any one to write himself down a merchant, and not have the means at command to meet any loss which, humanly speaking, he might at any moment incur, would have been looked upon as nothing short of swindling; and the individual found out risking in such transactions the money of those who confided in his integrity, would have been regarded as a kind of commercial "welcher,"—a man who bets high, who takes all he wins, but who, when luck turns against him, leaves those to whom he owes money to look for his whereabouts. But how is it now? How do hundreds of men, preparing to commence trading, get the capital on which to begin? Their method is simple and easy in the extreme. Of course we do not for a moment intend to include in our condemnation the old honoured mercantile firms of England. That many such still exist, there can be no more doubt than of the fact that they hold themselves perfectly aloof from anything like trade "welching." But unfortunately they are but few when compared with the hundreds of new mushroom houses that spring up daily in every direction. And the question then naturally arises—How is it

that these firms, which have no capital, manage to trade without the means on which to work?

Those persons who have not been behind the scenes of that great mercantile theatre called the City during the last three or four years, will find it extremely difficult to believe how much falsehood, how much paper credit, and how little substantial foundation, appertain to a vast number of our mercantile houses. Bank managers, bill-brokers, and the partners in the great discount houses in London, could make disclosures in this respect which would prove far more sensational reading than anything which has as yet appeared in the pages of our novels. Not that even the cleverest and most experienced of these gentlemen can always detect the rogue in the plausible so-called merchant; nor are they always able to distinguish the true metal from the mere electro-plated article, which often looks more valuable than the silver or gold which it is meant to copy. But the worst of the present condition of the trading world is the lowered—the greatly lowered—moral tone with which the influx of rascality has gradually leavened almost the whole mass of traders. Those who mix much with business men in private life will understand best what we mean. Of late years, even amongst merchants who commenced trade upon a bonâ-fide capital, there exists but too often a reckless spirit of adventure—based on the assumption that all commerce is now-a-days more or less dishonest, but that they must float with the stream—which is, to say the least of it, most painful to witness. We do not affirm that all commercial men have become rogues, but we maintain that unclean hands, slippery ways, and a general character of what Americans term "smartness" in business, are not looked upon with the same horror and detestation as they once were. A City man may in these days be known to be a rogue, his fellow-traders may be perfectly aware that he has done things which ought to have brought him before the Lord Mayor; but so long as he can hold his own, and put a fair face upon his questionable transactions, no man is bold enough to throw the first stone; and other so-called merchants of a like stamp, seeing how well he gets on, follow in his footsteps, and add to the number of those who have already succeeded to no small extent in ruining the commercial character which England has until lately enjoyed for integrity and honest dealing.

To illustrate our meaning with regard to the many firms that are endeavouring to make bricks without straw,—to make profits without any capital to work upon,—and which, under the pretext of trading, are really playing the—to them—profitable game of "heads I win, tails you lose," we will relate two cases of business of the present day, both of which have recently come under the immediate observation of the present writer.

Some three or four years ago a Scotchman, whom for distinction we will call John Adams, arrived in London. He was a man in the prime

of life, but with a baldness of head and a decided tendency to grey in his whiskers which added greatly to the respectability of his appearance. In a financial point of view, this gentleman's antecedents were not favourable. As a young man he had served five or six years in one of the Scotch banks, and had left that employment to take a better-paid situation in a large Glasgow commission house. After ten or twelve years in the latter capacity he had, with a capital of five hundred pounds, commenced business on his own account; but at the end of two years had failed for about five thousand pounds. There had been some difficulty about getting over the process of whitewashing, which after considerable delay had been surmounted, and a relative had made him a present of one hundred pounds, advising him to proceed to Australia and commence life there as a squatter; in any case—such was the condition on which he was given the money—he was not to show himself north of the Tweed again for the next ten years. But Mr. Adams had considerable misgiving respecting the success he was likely to have as a sheep-farmer at the antipodes, and so he came to London, determined to set up for himself as a merchant.

His first act was to obtain, by some means or other, an introduction to a fourth-rate bank. In those days—we speak of two and a half or three years ago—there were many banks only too glad to secure customers, and who looked upon any one who opened an account with a hundred pounds as something to be proud of, and to be mentioned at the next board-day meeting. Having thus laid the foundation of "respectability" by being able to talk of "his bank" and "his banking account," Mr. Adams hired a small office in the very centre of business-land, and had his name painted on the door, taking care to add the words "and Company." "JOHN ADAMS AND COMPANY, MERCHANTS AND COMMISSION AGENTS," looked well in Brook Court, and still better in the Post-Office Directory. The next thing was to get a couple of clerks without having to pay wages; and to obtain these, one pound of the hundred pounds' capital was expended in advertisements, addressed to parents and guardians who wished a commercial training for their sons. Not only did our friend obtain the services of one young man gratis, but he actually had a premium of fifty pounds paid by the father of another; and no small addition did this sum make to his somewhat scanty capital. With five or six pounds spent upon second-hand office-furniture, about half as much upon ledgers, daybooks, and stationery, the office, with two clerks in the outer room, was complete, and Mr. Adams began to look around him for business.

Did he get any—was he able to trade or traffic in goods or produce? Of course he was. He went to Manchester, and bought for cash small parcels of prints suitable for the Constantinople market. These he shipped to a Greek firm in that city, drawing upon them for the

value, and obtaining in return orders to purchase other merchandise, as well as to sell sundry lots of madder roots, oil, and various articles produced in the East, which they consigned to his care. He was a man thoroughly well versed in all the details of business life, not a great talker, always well, but not loudly, dressed, and eminently "respectable" in his looks and habits. Little by little he got a business, the foundation of which was stamped paper; for it was by bills, and bills only, that he could live in a commercial sense. In the City he had a friend who did business on commission for an iron company; this friend accepted bills for him, and he returned the compliment. These documents were artistically got up, and bore all the appearance of bonâ-fide mercantile paper. If Mr. Adams, of the firm of John Adams and Company, walked into the manager's room of the Incontestable Bank, and offered for discount bills drawn by his own house upon Messrs. James Mincing and Co., Iron Brokers, of Jude Lane, and duly accepted by that firm, could the said manager of the Incontestable refuse to discount them? Not on any account: had he done so, his bank would at once have lost a customer. There was only one thing which the friends who thus played into each other's hands had to be careful of, which was that "the paper" of John Adams and Co. and that of James Mincing and Co. should never be offered for discount at the same establishment; and this was very easy indeed to avoid. And when to these two "dummy" firms was added a third—William and Peter Cracks, also Commission Agents—which accepted and drew bills, and helped the others, of course the transaction became all the more easy. Not to make too long a story, it is only needful to say that the second year our friend was in business in London he "turned over" twenty-five thousand pounds in the course of twelve months; and that when the smash came,—when the facilities for obtaining money upon flash bills ceased,—he "cracked up," as a Yankee would say, for upwards of sixty thousand pounds, and went through the Bankruptcy Court with flying colours. It is needless to say that of these sixty thousand pounds he is generally supposed to have quietly invested something very comfortable in Consols; and when business in the City gets brisker, he will be quite ready to begin again.

The second instance we shall give of business as done in the present day is that of a shipowner. This gentleman, who shall go by the name of Johns, began life as—and was until four or five years ago—a steward of a large passenger steamer which "went foreign" out of an English provincial port. He had saved about three hundred pounds, and having married, aspired to be something higher in the world than a mere head-waiter in a floating hotel. His wife's father was a retired and pensioned clerk of a large shipowner, and between these two relatives there was concocted a scheme which soon floated them into the ocean of wealth. They commenced by purchasing an old ship which was sold by auction for a mere trifle, some eight hundred pounds. Of

this they paid a third in cash, and gave a bond upon the ship, with an insurance policy in the event of her being lost, for the balance. How they found the means to provision or to man her, the god of credit and the spirit of mercantile accommodation bills alone can tell. It is enough for us to know that they not only did so, but that they also freighted her on Government account to one of the colonies, and that the advance they obtained for her hire was enough to clear off the debt still remaining upon her. In her second voyage—out and home to Bombay—they not only paid their expenses, but made a profit sufficient to enable them to purchase and pay in part for another vessel, which they also freighted to Government, and which they also soon freed from debt. Had their operations ceased here, they might still have paid their way, and even have made a modest living out of the two ships they owned. But about the time of which we write the mania for speculations in cotton was at its height, and these ship-owners went largely into that most risky trade. In order to obtain funds with which to pay for the cotton they bought, they mortgaged their vessels to their full value. So long as prices kept up all went well; but when cotton which they had bought in Egypt at from one and sixpence to two shillings a pound, could hardly be sold in London for eightpence, they, as a matter of course, were unable to meet their engagements; and after struggling on for a short season, went into the Bankruptcy Court to get rid of more than fifty thousand pounds' worth of debts and liabilities, all of which had to be borne by, and were a dead loss to, some person or persons somewhere in the mercantile world.

Are these two instances,—both of them actual facts, as we said before, which have occurred within the knowledge of the present writer, and are told exactly as they happened in all respects except that the names are changed,—are these two instances in any way exceptional? are they selected because they are extraordinary and out-of-the-way cases of mercantile recklessness? By no means. Saint Pauls Magazine might be filled with similar instances of men without a shilling of capital to begin upon doing a large business, and failing for fabulous sums. Nor are English men of business by any means the cleverest adepts at this work. To do foreigners—and particularly Greeks, Levantines, and all the various trading classes that hail from the East—but justice, the grand discovery of working and trading upon bills, and bills only, was made in classic lands. It is a means of commerce which was first invented in the Levant, and only of late years brought to a certain degree of perfection in England. The results of this art we are now enjoying, but we cannot claim to be the original discoverers of the science. Like many other luxuries, it came originally from the East; and the following story will show how it has been worked in this country by those who brought it with them from other countries.

Some years ago there came to Liverpool a Greek gentleman who set up in business as the correspondent of two firms—one at Constantinople, the other at Alexandria. The house he established in England went by the name of Messrs. Acapulos and Co.;* that at Constantinople was called Acapulos Brothers; and the one at Alexandria, Spesa and Acapulos. Of these names, all save the one name in each house was nothing more than a pleasant fiction. The one only partner in the three houses was Mr. Demetrius Acapulos, the enterprising individual who had come to Liverpool, taken an office, and written himself down Acapulos and Company. In due time this gentleman commenced to buy what are called Manchester goods suitable for the Levantine markets. He was wary and cautious in his dealings, and evidently extremely grasping in his desire to make good bargains. But so far from causing him to be thought any the worse of, these peculiarities only made the Manchester manufacturers and spinners believe him to be a man who had money, and was anxious to turn it to the best possible advantage. In Manchester it is the custom to pay for goods fourteen days after delivery; but many purchasers avail themselves of the discount allowed for cash, and pay for what they buy on receipt. Mr. Acapulos followed the latter plan, which had not only the advantage of giving him greater profit, but made those he dealt with believe him to be a man with considerable funds at command.

It soon became known to those who cared to inquire concerning his means that Mr. Acapulos used to receive remittances from abroad, and that both by specie shipped from Alexandria to Liverpool, and by bankers' or other good bills from Constantinople, his balance at the bank where he kept his account was always maintained at a highly respectable figure. All this increased his local credit. Once put a mercantile firm upon the proper groove, and it will run as quickly and as smoothly towards the terminus of a good name as it otherwise does upon that railway of discredit which leads to insolvency. Demetrius knew this: he acted in conformity with his knowledge. And we would draw particular notice to the manner in which he put himself in funds,—a method simple in the extreme, of purely Hellenic origin, but which of late years has found many imitators in England amongst English merchants of the lower class, and which has been one of the great, if not the one great, reason of the present collapse of credit in the mercantile world. "Don't talk to me about capital," a French mercantile adventurer once said to the present writer, who shared a cabin with him from Marseilles to Constantinople some years ago,—"don't talk to me of capital! It is the bugbear of you Englishmen. With good management, pen, ink, and bill-stamps (papier timbré), a man of business ought to have at his command any amount of capital

* Although the anecdote is strictly true, we need hardly say that this name, like all the others in this paper, is purely fictitious.

he requires." Demetrius Acapulos had evidently heard of, and had appreciated, this maxim.

Demetrius was not a man of capital, but he was a man of business. The firms at Constantinople and Alexandria were, as we have said before, mere dummies; they had no real partners, but were simply conducted by clerks who were cousins and brothers of the master-mind at Liverpool, and entirely under his directions. When he wanted money he advised one or other of those houses,—say, that at Constantinople,—the manager of which immediately drew upon the house at Alexandria, discounted the bill of exchange, and transmitted the proceeds to Liverpool, either in specie or bankers' bills. Nor was this difficult to effect. Messrs. Acapulos Brothers, of Constantinople, being known to have branch houses at Alexandria and in Liverpool, and being able to show letters authorising them to draw upon one or other of these firms, found no difficulty in selling their bills. The house on which they invariably drew, as a matter of course, accepted their drafts, no matter to what amount; and when these were about to fall due, they put themselves in funds by drawing on another house of the same partnership. To make this very simple transaction the clearer to non-mercantile minds, we will say that when A wanted money he drew upon B, and when B had to pay the bill he drew upon C, who to obtain funds drew again upon A, and thus the game went round. So long as money was plentiful, credit easy, and there were not too many "firms" who did business in this way, all went smooth, and the profits were immense, the more so as all the money coming in was interest upon no capital whatever: the system was a gold mine, a veritable California, without the fatigue of hard labour, or the danger of a bad climate. At one time Messrs. Acapulos and Company, of Liverpool, were "turning over" little short of three hundred thousand sterling per annum; and could not be making less than thirty to forty thousand a year clear profit. But unfortunately they could not preserve the monopoly of such a business. Other wise men came from the East, and set up in the same line. More and more followed in the same track. Not only Liverpool, but Manchester, Leeds, Bristol, and even London, by degrees became inundated with firms who conducted business on a similar paper basis. Many of our own countrymen were only too apt in learning this newly-found way of making bricks without straw, until mercantile men who really worked upon a capital of their own were the exception and not the rule.

The day of reckoning came slowly, but it came surely. When eighteen months ago the thaw came which melted into water the thin ice on which so many mushroom banks and discount companies were built, it was somewhat difficult for these concerns to get back their capital, for it had nearly all been lent upon paper which was not worth the stamps on which the bills were drawn. When a merchant

ships bonâ-fide goods to another country, and draws upon his correspondent or agent for the value of those goods, leaving a certain margin for the casualties of any depreciation which may take place in their value, the bills which he then puts into the market have an actual value. They represent the price of, or money paid for, the goods which he has sent off. This is legitimate trading, and until within the last ten or fifteen years, no other way of doing business was known in England. The illustrations of trading in the present day afforded by the anecdotes we have related, will afford some clue by which even non-business men can understand why our credit at home, and our good name abroad, are now things of the past.

And when to utter recklessness—not to call it worse—in trade, is added great extravagance in living, can we wonder at the present condition of commercial England, which, as the Times lately said, and said truly, "has no precedent in our financial history?"

If from what we may term the ordinary legitimate trade of the country we turn to the Joint Stock Company jobbery which for two or three years was the prevalent madness of England, we shall find additional reason for not being surprised at the utter want of credit which now exists. The history of this branch of speculation is unfortunately but too well known amongst all classes of the community, and the results, from which we are now suffering, are but the natural effects of the proceedings which in 1863-4 enriched a few rogues, and left so many confiding men and women to lament the money, and the comforts which money brings, now gone where last year's snow is.

And yet, can we absolve from blame that very public which has lost so much? Let us look our faults boldly in the face, and answer honestly the question whether "promoters" and other schemers and traders in the good faith of shareholders could ever have made the profits they did, if those who trusted in them had not been actuated by the enormous greed of gain, which has been almost a disease amongst us for the last few years. Take, for instance, a class that is said to have suffered in proportion to their numbers more than any other, by the rascalities of the joint stock company jobbers—namely, that of retired pensioned Indian officers, civil as well as military. All these gentlemen may be said to have had the means to live in comfort, some even in luxury. They all had pensions earned by years of hard toil in the land of heat and fevers. But they were not content with their modest incomes. No sooner did the Limited Liability Act come into full play, than, to use a vulgar but expressive phrase, they "went in for it" with a vigour and an earnestness—we may with justice add a recklessness—which has now reaped its fruit. And in proportion as they risked their own property, they induced others to risk theirs. Thrice happy was Robert Macaire—the fashionably dressed, smart spoken, vulgar promoter of the Invincible Financial Banking Company, Limited—if he could get Major-General Dupeman, late

Deputy Adjutant-General at Berhampore, to "join the direction" of that excellent undertaking. Not only was the unfortunate officer plucked bare of every feather on his body, but he afterwards served as a decoy-duck by which others were induced to join the same concern. Dupeman was known to be an honest, honourable, simple-minded soldier. Of business he knew nothing beyond how to make his income and his expenditure tally at the end of the year. He believed all that Mr. Macaire told him. He became a director of the Invincible, and thereby induced Brown, the ex-judge of Palampore, and Jones, formerly magistrate at Goernuggur, to do the same. Seeing these well-known names on the direction, Robinson, and Smith, and Mrs. Wilson the widow, and Smalls the retired chaplain, took shares in the concern, and until the smash came, they believed that they were getting a fabulous percentage on the money they had paid for their shares. The result we all know. Dupeman, instead of living in London on £2,000 a-year, is vegetating at St. Malo upon £150; Brown has had to go through the Bankruptcy Court; Jones is in hiding from his creditors; Mrs. Wilson has opened a lodging-house in Brompton; and Smalls was last week arrested and put into Whitecross Street. We may, and we do, pity greatly all these people, but did not the universal greed for money—or rather the belief of being able to make money without capital—cause all this misery? The mania, we grant, was almost universal, so much so that it was difficult to avoid catching the infection. But did not those who caught it suffer from their own determination to gain money without labour and without capital, a thing which, as a rule, no man ever yet did—although now and then there have been exceptions—without paying the penalty.

But in the long history of the cheating, which is comprised in the financial history of the past three years, there is nothing half so astonishing as what a late parliamentary return has brought to light. To take up in detail the company-creation work of 1864 and 1865, would be but to repeat a story which every one has heard again and again. We all know how scheme upon scheme, imposition upon imposition, and swindle upon swindle, followed each other in close succession. Few can forget—many of us, indeed, have sad cause to remember—how one after another of these undertakings collapsed, were knocked down, and fell like so many nine-pins, to be carried away and chopped up for firewood, with which solicitors, official liquidators, accountants, and other functionaries, were to warm their houses and make merry. All this we know had happened, but few of us thought it was still going on. Most persons thought that with the fall of Overend, Gurney, and Co., the joint stock company mania received its death-blow. But a recently printed return from the Board of Trade has completely dispersed this idea. So far from the manufactory of joint stock companies having stopped, it appears to be going on almost as incessantly as before. Between the

1st June, 1866, and the 31st of May, 1867, no fewer than 543 new companies were registered, and of these 539 were formed under the Limited Liability Act. It would, however, be wrong to say that all these 543 undertakings were mere financial bubbles, although the exceptions are certainly few. Some of the nominally new schemes are merely the resuscitation of old companies, which were brought down last year more by the systematic working of the "bears" on the Stock Exchange than by any intrinsic weakness of their own. But notwithstanding this, a very large proportion of the new companies are the wildest speculations it is possible to conceive; and the fact that of the 543, upwards of 150 appear to have no offices at all, and only about as many more have offices within five miles of the General Post-Office, shows that a vast majority of these new schemes are merely biding their time until the present distrust has died away, and hope at some future period to spring into existence as full-blown absorbers of money. But it is not the less a bad omen for the future to find that, far from being dead, the spirit of illegitimate speculation is only sleeping, and is ready, with all its many swindles ready cut and dried, to reassume its old function as a means not only of ruining those who trust in it, but also of encouraging speculators without means to again "try their luck" at the gambling-tables, where shares are used in the same way as counters are on the green-cloth tables of Homburg or Baden.

What is the remedy for this state of things? When may we expect it to come to an end? When may we look to see trade and finance resuming their legitimate kind of business? These questions are not easy to answer without extending this paper far beyond its proper limits. This much, however, may be safely assumed, that the cure for the present depressed state of commerce does not lie so much with the legislature, as with the merchants of England themselves. There are no laws half so efficient in repressing the evils which affect a class as the rules and regulations made by those who are by position the leading men of that class. The honourable merchants, the legitimate speculators, and the solvent banks in this country, are of themselves more than powerful enough so to rule and regulate trade, as to make it very difficult for the mere adventurer without funds to enter their circle and play at the game at which, if he wins, the gains are his, while if he loses the loss falls on his neighbours who trust him. Surely if bakers, butchers, wine merchants, and other tradesmen can combine in what are called Trade Associations, for the purpose of preventing would-be swindling customers from obtaining credit to which they are not entitled, merchants and bankers might very easily enter into similar unions, by which men who have neither means nor character to trade should be prevented from doing so; while rules might be made by which no manufacturer would sell them anything unless for cash, no banker discount their bills, no

broker buy goods or sell produce on their account. The guilds and city companies of older days were originally constituted for the very purpose of keeping trade free from those who had no right to traffic because they had not the means of doing so; and to something of the same sort we shall have to revert, in order to restore commercial credit to its proper state. For our merchants now to do this as one body would be impossible, for the simple reason, that where there was formerly one, there are now forty or fifty traders. But there is no reason why it should not be done by Commercial Clubs, or Chambers of Commerce. There might very easily be enacted rules by which no person should be considered a merchant unless he belonged to an association of the kind; and each such body could be considered responsible for the respectability of its own members, and obliged to ascertain, before they admitted any one into their body, that he had something more than what bill-brokers call "mere pig-upon-bacon"* paper as a capital to trade upon. These, of course, are but suggestions roughly thrown out; but there can be no doubt that if business in England is ever to resume and preserve the character it formerly enjoyed, and if ever capitalists can hope to find a legitimate outlet for their millions now lying idle, something must be done to surround commerce with a hedge strong enough to keep out swindling adventurers who have no more right to compete in trade with boná-fide merchants, than a man without money has to demand change for a ten-pound note, or than an individual would have to draw a cheque upon a bank in which he has no funds.

* "Pig-upon-bacon" bills are drafts such as Mr. Acapulos drew, which although *apparently* drawn upon, and accepted by another party, are *really* drawn upon the individual who draws them.

WEARY NOVEMBER.

If one might choose one's rest, I would choose
  Sleep, that never is troubled or stirred,—
Folded hands, 'neath the grass and the dews
  And the soft song of a bird.

Rest from love,—as bitter as sweet,—
  From ghostly doubtings of faith and trust;
With my heart, once racked with a restless beat,
  Only a pinch of dust.

Rest from the labour, that comes to nought,
  From the tender anguish of poets' songs;
Rest from the hunger and drought of thought,
  And the sight of others' wrongs.

Only, as there I slept in my cell,
  I must have in my cold hand, closely prest,
The hand of the one who loves me well,—
  Or that sleep would not be rest.

If one might choose one's rest, I would choose
  Sleep, where a tear's drop is not heard,
Where one does not know what it is to lose—
  Even a dog or a bird.

T. H.

OUR FORTIFICATIONS.

On the north side of the Thames' mouth, subtended by the Nore and Sheerness, and imbedded in the Essex flat, stretches the dreary waste of marsh, sand, and turf of which few of our readers can fail to have heard under its now famous name of Shoeburyness. Nowhere along the indented and extended coast-line of the British Isles can a spot naturally more desolate be found. Neither to agriculturist, botanist, ornithologist, conchologist, nor entomologist does the vicinity of Shoeburyness offer any of those congenial attractions which the sea-coast elsewhere commonly boasts. During three-fourths of the year a searching and penetrating sea-wind sweeps over the inhospitable surface of the waste, and lops the heads of the marsh grass as it were with the blade of a knife. Here, and perhaps here alone, in the county of Essex, Mr. Mechi would forswear his optimist views as to the possibility of raising a profitable crop. Not a page would Mr. Philip Henry Gosse here add to his "Manual of Marine Zoology," or to his elaborate "History of British Sea Anemones." Let Mr. Hewitson's ardour in collecting shells and birds'-nests be what it may, there is nothing which would tempt him to linger long at Shoeburyness in the hope of adding fresh specimens of butterflies or lepidoptera to his already unrivalled collections. Nor would the indefatigable patience and investigating zeal of Mr. George Henry Lewes long fortify him in his search for eye of newt and toe of frog, against the disenchanting influences which would here surround him.

Nevertheless, the very unfitness of Shoeburyness for other avocations and recreations has led to its selection as the spot where the great duel between the attacking and defensive forces of modern times should be fought out. Be our shortcomings in guns and armour-plates what they may, no other nation has hitherto expended one-tenth of the money in gunnery experiments, and in testing the power of resistants, which, with true wisdom and economy, we have already devoted at Shoeburyness to these tentative rehearsals of war. In spite of the bloody and exciting stimulation supplied to them by four unparalleled years of strife, our Transatlantic cousins did not commence their experiments with heavy guns against various kinds of armour-plated fortifications until long after the actual fighting had ceased. It is now about fourteen months since a Board of United States army officers, of which Generals Barnard, Gilmore, and Brewerton were the chief members, commenced their experiments at Fortress Monroe. In their

gunnery practice of 1866, which was of an incomplete character, the Americans fastened plates of wrought iron in front of the section of a fort, and discharged guns of a heavy calibre at these iron plates. To quote the words of the Times' accurate American correspondent, "nearly every shot penetrated, and some went entirely through the protecting plates of iron 4 inches thick, and only a few shots were fired before the granite wall behind the plates, varying from 8 feet to 12 feet in thickness, and strengthened with stout iron girders and bolts, became a crumbling ruin." It is worthy of remark that, as we shall presently show, our own experiments of the resisting power of granite are singularly in harmony with the American experiments of 1866 at Fortress Monroe. Much more extensive preparations have been made for the American experiments of 1867, and it is possible that before these words meet the public eye, detailed accounts of the results attained will have been transmitted across the Atlantic. But we observe with satisfaction that the same professional jealousy which recently induced our own Royal Engineers to conceal a demolished target behind a thick tarpaulin is at least as rife among the Americans as among ourselves. Strict orders have been issued by the American Government that no information on the subject of the gunnery trials shall be communicated to the public in advance of the official report which is expected by their War Department. Nevertheless, nothing would surprise us less than to find that some American journal is no less outspoken and accurate about the Fortress Monroe experiments than was our own Standard in the description which its correspondent, although forbidden to be present, gave of the trial to which one of Colonel Inglis's iron shields was subjected at Shoeburyness.

The value of the experience which we have gained at Shoeburyness has, as we have already said, not been thrown away upon the Americans. The additional care and expense which they have bestowed upon their Fortress Monroe experiments of 1867 are well worthy of notice, and demand a few words of further comment. In addition to the combinations of stone, brickwork, and iron upon which they experimented in 1866, they have erected sections of three forts for trial in 1867. These sections of forts represent three casemates, one belonging to Fortress Monroe, a second to Fort Carroll, and a third to Fort Wool,—the last two forts being situated near the mouth of Chesapeake Bay,—and have been selected for trial because they are portions of the three strongest works upon the North American continent. The casemates have been constructed with the greatest accuracy, and the varieties of stone and cement employed in the original works have been reproduced in the imitations. The walls vary from 7 feet to 12 feet in thickness, and the average breadth and height of the surfaces exposed to the guns are about 24 square feet. Plates of wrought iron 4 inches thick coat the whole exterior face. No estimate of the outlay expended upon this work has ever entered into the calcu-

lation of its constructors, who, with true American magnificence, take more heed to secure valuable results than to count the cost of the operation. Targets to ascertain the exact range of the guns, and electric facilities for gauging the initial velocity of the shots, are not wanting. Moreover, in addition to these artificial casemates, a heavy cemented stone wall has been erected, with a cushion of sand, some 18 feet thick, strapped in front of it. We have recited enough about the intended experiments at Fortress Monroe to demonstrate that, before long, another trial-ground will claim as much attention, and be as pregnant with instruction for artillerists, as Shoeburyness itself.

Meanwhile, the visitor, if curious about guns and shields, will find plenty to repay him for his journey from the metropolis to the mouth of the Thames. Here may be seen, ranged out at sea, or in a line parallel to the coast, targets of iron varying in thickness, backed by all kinds of support, riddled with shot, bulged, cracked, riven, and penetrated, and altogether in seemingly deplorable plight. Separated from these targets, sometimes by a distance of 70 yards, sometimes of two miles, stand guns of every description, from the old-fashioned 68-pounder smooth-bore, recently esteemed the most formidable weapon that forts or ships could carry, up to the Armstrong rifled 600-pounder, or the huge American Rodman smooth-bore, 15 inches in calibre. Stretched across between the target and the gun when a trial takes place may be seen fine gossamer wires, placed at even distances from each other, which, being lacerated by the shot in its passage, record through the marvellous agency of electricity the precise velocity at which it speeds upon its way, and thus enable us to calculate the force of the crushing blow which the target will receive. Mark that granite ruin which stands as a perpetual monument of the explosion of a theory which, until the 15th and 16th of November, 1865, had gained a firm footing in the minds of the Iron Plate and Ordnance Select Committee, and of the favoured engineers attached to the War Department itself. Previous to that date it was believed that a combination of granite and iron was the Eureka which would give security to our land forts. At a cost of £8,000, the War Department erected at Shoeburyness a structure embodying their most approved notions of the latest development of military engineering. It consisted of two artificial granite casemates with two embrasures let into them, and protected with iron shields. The granite casemates were, in substance, a solid stone wall 14 feet in thickness, and with 2 feet of brickwork behind the granite. Of the two embrasures, the eastern or larger was fitted with a built-up shield, and the western or smaller with a solid plate of iron 18½ inches thick. The built-up shield, invented by Mr. Chalmers, had a front plate of 4 inches thick, and a backing of thin iron plates 8 inches deep. With their habitual precipitation, our Royal Engineers, before testing this granite structure, jumped to the conclusion that all our great national defences

were to be constructed on this plan, and that the works at Spithead, Plymouth, and all over England, to say nothing of our colonies, were to consist of iron strapped upon granite. Extensive contracts for granite, with a view to pushing on our defensive works all round the globe, were hastily entered into. Unfortunately, the combination-of-iron-with-granite theory received, upon the 15th and 16th of November, 1865, its final sentence of doom. The casemates were rendered untenable after the first ten rounds, and when eighty rounds had been discharged at them with projectiles none of which reached 300 pounds in weight, the whole work became a disintegrated ruin. From that moment it became abundantly apparent that, in conformity with the already declared opinions of Todleben, Brialmont, and Niel, nothing but solid iron was available for employment in first-class permanent forts, and in sites too straitened to admit of the construction of earthworks, or exposed to the wash of the waves.

The subject of our fortifications, ventilated as it has been in the public press, is one which has excited very general interest, not only in the army and navy, but also in both Houses of Parliament, and in the country at large. Nothing is more unfounded than the belief, inculcated by some shallow and short-sighted military engineers, that the science of military engineering is one concerning which civilians of ordinary intelligence are incapable of forming an opinion. It is beyond a peradventure that there are in these islands scores of civilians whose whole lives have been spent in managing iron foundries, and who understand the manipulation, texture, and adaptation of wrought and cast iron far more thoroughly than Sir John Burgoyne, or Sir William Denison, or any of their professional underlings. Nothing is so much to be desired in the true interest of the nation at large as that it shall be conceded that the whole question of our national fortifications is not to be the monopoly of military men. Our Royal Artillerymen are the first to exclaim against our Royal Engineers when it is found that casemates and shields, designed to protect gunners, are, in fact, nothing but man-traps. Such being the case, it is impossible that public attention can be too forcibly drawn to the paramount importance of enlisting in the service of the State the best talent, both military and civilian, which is available for the purpose of rightly directing the large outlay upon permanent fortifications which the House of Commons has sanctioned.

From the moment in which it became possible, through the aid of steam flotillas, to throw large armies upon our shores at different points within a few hours, instead of within a few days, the subject of our coast defences has assumed increasing importance. The introduction of the new rifled cannon, the knowledge that the city of Charleston was riddled with projectiles discharged from guns situated four and a half miles from the spot where their shells burst, and the formidable power of iron-plated ships carrying the heaviest

guns, while they are themselves absolutely invulnerable at 400 yards to the strongest ordnance designed for any of our forts, lend to this whole question of our national defences an almost dramatic interest. In old times we did not consider ourselves safe unless our navy was at least a match for all the fleets of the great Powers combined. In these days of iron-clads it is scarcely possible for us to keep armoured ships to be pitted against all the other armoured ships which France, the United States, and Russia, if in combination, might bring against us. For these reasons, it is quite clear that if, in time of war, the enemy could obtain command of the Channel for even 100 hours, we might have to meet on our own shores several foreign armies perfectly equipped, the aggregate of which would far outnumber all our regular soldiers and militia combined. If it were possible to fortify the whole of our coast so that an enemy could nowhere land without considerable delay, we might be considered in a secure position. But when it is remembered that the southern and eastern coast-line of England stretches for 750 miles from the Humber to Penzance, including 350 miles in the aggregate where a landing may be effected, it is obvious that such a series of fortifications cannot be seriously contemplated. The whole subject was referred by Lord Palmerston's Government, in 1859, to a commission of distinguished officers, who made an elaborate report, which was presented to Parliament in 1860. In it they recommended that vital spots along the coast, such as our arsenals and dockyards at Portsmouth, Plymouth, Pembroke, Sheerness, and elsewhere, should be protected, not only by permanent fortifications covering them from an attack by sea, but also by land forts, covering them from an attack en revers by land, conducted by an enemy who had disembarked at some unprotected spot. It was obviously the design of the Royal Commissioners of 1859 to protect, let us say, Portsmouth from being shelled by ships at sea, or by siege guns erected upon Portsdown Hill. The recommendations of this report, although costly, were sensible, if viewed in the light which then illuminated its authors, and, having been warmly championed by Lord Palmerston, they were adopted by Parliament to the tune of nearly £11,000,000.

It appears from a Parliamentary Return of 26th March, 1867, that up to January 1st, 1867, seventy-one works of different kinds had actually been commenced, and an outlay of nearly £7,000,000 up to that time incurred. Few less cheering or reassuring studies await any patriotic Englishman than an investigation as to what portion of those seven millions has been profitably, and what portion unprofitably, spent. It is hardly necessary to remark that, since the Report of 1860 was made public, vast advances have been made in the power of guns, and in the density of iron armour-plates. Further commissions and committees have consequently become necessary, and have reconsidered the same subject in all its bearings, with the advantage of the new lights

obtained from experiments at Shoeburyness and in actual war. A body of scientific officers, called the Iron Plate Committee, have tested the new guns, with their multiform projectiles, against the constantly increasing strength of the targets devised by our skilled workers in iron. The American war, with all the lessons taught by the original conflict between the Monitor and Merrimac, and with all the experiences gained at Wilmington, Charleston, Savannah, Mobile, New Orleans, Galveston, and Vicksburg, has been studied with interest, though not with close attention, and its teachings have been more or less utilised. The battle of Lissa has contributed a valuable chapter of experience. Under the strong momentum imparted to public opinion by the American and German wars, and by the sense of our own insecurity, there is little to surprise us in the fact that giant strides have been made both in the powers of offence and defence. Some idea may be given of the prodigious force with which massive bolts are now hurled, when it is recorded that a shot of 150 pounds has been fired at a velocity of 2,010 feet per second, or, in other words, at the rate of 22 miles in a minute. The intensity of the shock with which a chilled projectile driven at this velocity must strike upon a given object needs not to be enforced. Sir William Armstrong has constructed a rifled gun which carries a shot about 500 pounds in weight, while the Americans are busy with a smooth-bore which is to deliver a projectile weighing more than 1,000 pounds. There is little doubt that we shall soon possess ordnance which will pierce the 9 inches of the Hercules at close quarters, and will riddle the 4½ inches of the Warrior at a distance of nearly 2 miles. On the other hand, Sir John Brown has successfully rolled armour-plates up to 15 inches of solid iron, and his example will soon be followed by other firms. It will thus be seen that we have neither ascertained the limit of the force which a projectile may attain, nor have we gauged the ultimate thickness of the defensive armour which is to coat our land forts. The only clearly-defined limit which we appear to be approaching is the weight of iron armour which the flotation of our sea-going broadside ships will enable them to carry.

The recommendation of the Royal Commissioners in 1860, that the defence of our dockyards against sea-attack should be confided to a combined system of forts and floating batteries, has been fiercely assailed by several distinguished officers, who advocate the employment of floating batteries alone. Two additional Reports, emanating from fresh commissioners, have, however, confirmed the wisdom of the views enunciated in 1860. The plan which is at present being carried out, is to erect advanced forts, invulnerable to attack, and self-supporting, which may command the sea to such a distance as to preclude an enemy's ship from lying within shelling range of a dockyard. In case the outer forts should be passed, other forts are being

constructed within, which are to continue the fight. These outer and inner forts, being built either upon land or at least upon solid foundations, admit of being coated with armour of any weight, and of carrying guns of any conceivable calibre. In spite of the famous dictum of Vauban that never yet was fort constructed which could not be taken, these forts are, in fact, intended to be impregnable. They are to be assisted by floating batteries, with a steam power of from 8 to 10 knots, mounting the heaviest guns and the heaviest armour, and somewhat resembling the American Monitors. These are intended to force an enemy's ship, should it pass the outer forts, to assume a position in which it will have to sustain such a concentrated fire from forts and floating batteries as will suffice to secure its destruction. This system, deliberately adopted by several consecutive commissions, and approved by Sir John Burgoyne, Inspector-General of Fortifications, seems not ill calculated to attain the object desired. But before it had been matured, a vast amount of money had already been spent, of which there can be little doubt that the larger proportion has been as recklessly wasted as the huge sums expended upon Cherbourg by the French, or upon Alderney by ourselves.

There is a certain type of mind which, if our foreign critics and detractors are to be believed, is habitually prevalent among Englishmen, and which leads men to think that, if there is danger to be faced, the best way of meeting it is by spending money. To this class the minds of Lords Palmerston and Herbert, enriched as they were with many valuable attributes, eminently belonged. Lord Palmerston never could be made to regard this question of erecting permanent fortifications along the British coast in any other light than as an insurance to be effected upon valuable property, or as money spent by the owner of an estate in draining and subsoil-ploughing it. He seemed unable to discern that to spend money in erecting weak and faulty fortifications is very much worse than to spend no money at all. The value of the money wasted is the least important item to be considered. The mischief of such forts as are now being erected upon the No Man and Horse Shoals at Spithead and at Gilkicker Point is, that artillerymen are taught in times of peace to place implicit confidence in works which will crumble in fragments about their ears in times of war. There never yet existed an officer who had much experience in war but was prepared to maintain that it is far more dangerous to place artillerymen, and especially inexperienced artillerymen, behind shields and mantlets which will immediately go to pieces under fire, than it is to bid them fight their guns en barbette, or with open traverses dividing gun from gun. Buoy men up with a false promise of security, and they will no longer quit themselves like men when they find that they have been bubbled. The forts upon which Lords Herbert and Palmerston, and their professional advisers, were swift to lavish premature millions, are, to quote Lord Macaulay's simile, like [illegible]

sea-mirage in which the mariner sees false cliffs and imaginary headlands, and which is far more dangerous than midnight darkness itself. The experience of Fort Sumter is pregnant with warning to all who are willing or able to learn. Standing in the throat of Charleston harbour, half-way between Morris and Sullivan Islands, and raising its triple tier of guns and its frowning casemates of brickwork proudly aloft, Fort Sumter was held before the American war to be, like Corinth, "a fortress form'd to Freedom's hands." Identified with the opening scene which heralded the bloodiest strife known within half a century, Fort Sumter, from its blood-stained and dislocated ruins, preaches a lesson more deserving the attention of military engineers than any that its upright walls and unmutilated casemates once conveyed. Rent, torn, riven by Federal shot, its barbette guns all dismounted, its embrasures knocked together in battered masses, Fort Sumter appeared "per damna, per cædes ab ipso Ducere opes animumque ferro." Again and again the crenelated heaps of crumbling brickwork, supplemented and knit together with gabions and sandbags, resumed their old attitude of defiance. In spite of tons upon tons of iron poured into the ruin from the Federal mortars, planted only 1,200 yards off on the extremity of Morris Island, for well-nigh four years the young flag of the Confederate States and the palmetto-tree of South Carolina floated insolently from Fort Sumter's twin flagstaffs; nor were they ever lowered before the direct fire of the enemy, or until the successful march of Sherman from Atlanta to Savannah sealed the doom of the rebellion.

The heroic resistance of Fort Sumter, eclipsing, as it does, such famous passages of history as Sale's defence of Jellalabad against the Affghans, or Havelock's obdurate tenure of the Residency at Lucknow, teaches that fortifications suddenly improvised to meet the exigencies of an attack, are like Todleben's earthworks at Sebastopol, of more account than acres of brickwork and masonry elaborately prepared in time of peace. It was not until July, 1863, more than two years after the commencement of the war, that Fort Sumter, weak and vulnerable as its defenders knew it to be, melted away before the fire of the rifled Parrot guns established by the Federals on Morris Island. It was at this moment that General Beauregard's chief engineer, Colonel Harris, remarked to Major Elliot, the officer in command of Fort Sumter, "There is a brigadier-generalship in those shapeless old ruins yet, if you know how to make use of them." In what fashion Major Elliot secured this generalship has already been recorded in history. But we who, being in possession of abundance of heavy guns, and of an unlimited supply of spade-labour, are told that there is no safety for Portsmouth and Plymouth unless defended by towering, permanent castles of brickwork or masonry coated with iron, may be excused if we point to Fort Sumter, more formidable in its ruins than in its integrity,—to

the "scientific sandhills" which for three and three-quarter years successfully defended the mouth of the Cape Fear River and the approach to Wilmington,—to the mounds of earth which for more than two years controlled the Mississippi at Vicksburg, and which for four years defied the whole power of the Federal navy at Drewry's Bluff, and closed the James River and the approach to Richmond against the Monitors of the enemy.

Some of our readers will learn with surprise that out of the seventy-one works commenced in conformity with the recommendation of the Royal Commissioners some seven years ago, not one has as yet received its armament. If it be urged that it is scandalous that, after wasting seven years, and spending seven millions of money, we should be totally unprepared for the enemy, it must be confessed, on the other hand, that the revelations of the last few weeks ought to lead us to congratulate ourselves that no forts have been actually armed or completed. For the late trials, which have weighed in the balance not only the Malta shields, but also, as has been well pointed out by Lord Elcho, the men who are responsible for their construction, clearly establish that the War Office is unequal to the task which it has taken in hand, and that its employés are either unconscious of their incapacity, or determined to reject the assistance of competent advisers, even at the expense of failure.

It appears that towards the close of 1866, and at the commencement of 1867, the idea was conceived that it was desirable to protect the embrasures of forts at Plymouth, Malta, Gibraltar, and Bermuda with iron shields. Contracts were at once entered into for twenty of these devices, and fifteen more were subsequently added,—each of the thirty-five shields being contracted for at the cost of £1,000. These shields are 12 feet long by 8 feet high. The outside plate, or plank of iron, is 5½ inches thick, 12 feet in length, and 4 feet in breadth. Behind the outer plate is another of the same length and breadth, and 5 inches in thickness. In the rear of all is a skin-plate 1½ inches in thickness. It will thus be seen that the total thickness of the shield is 12 inches. The port-hole for the gun is 4 feet 1 inch high by 2 feet 10 inches wide. Below the port-hole there are four girders, called H girders, and three above the port-hole, all riveted to the inner skin-plate. The plates are kept upright by a buttress of plate and angle iron, leaning against their back at either end of the shield, and fastened with screw-bolts, which pass through the front and middle plates and the skin. The aggregate thickness of 12 inches of iron is, as we have shown, attained by fastening three plates together upon what is called the laminated or plank-upon-plank system. Incredible as it may appear, these thirty-five shields, although condemned by every scientific civilian cognizant of the nature of their structure, have all, with the exception of one or two, been shipped off untested to their distant destinations, and,

unless wiser counsels prevail, are to be erected as a challenge to the American fleet at Bermuda, and paraded as the best specimens of military engineering that England can produce before the scrutinising gaze of foreign men-of-war cruising in the Mediterranean.

Fortunately for the credit of England, these shields have not escaped the vigilance of some private members of Parliament, who have, by repeated speeches and questions, attracted to this important question the attention of the House of Commons and of the entire country. Lord Elcho, General Dunne, and Mr. O'Beirne have been conspicuous in their onslaught upon Sir John Pakington, and have shown incontestably that the shields have not only been shipped off without any model target having been made in imitation of them, and subjected to trial, but also that the laminated principle upon which they are constructed was emphatically condemned after trial by the Iron Plate Committee in 1862. "It appears then,"—we are quoting from the Iron Plate Committee's Report,—"that even a shield 15 inches in thickness, if constructed in three layers of 5 inches, could not long resist such a gun as the 300-pounder with large charges of powder; the initial velocity of the shot and the work done being so great that nothing less than 7½ inch solid iron will resist it. Probably, therefore, plates or planks 8 inches thick are the least that should be used for a coast battery."

Yielding to an attack which could neither be flanked nor confronted, Sir John Pakington promised to detain one of the shields,—the last left in England, if we mistake not, out of the thirty-five,—and to have it fairly tested. He also promised that a target exactly representing or being a section of the Plymouth Breakwater Fort, now in course of construction, should be set up at Shoeburyness, and subjected to the fire of the largest guns, English and foreign, now in our possession. At the latter end of last October the Malta shield was accordingly tested at Shoeburyness. Contrary to all precedent, sentries forbade the representatives of the press to approach the trial-ground, and none but the military officials concerned in the trial were permitted to be present. Immediately after the firing the battered target was closely veiled by a tarpaulin covering. The piece of ordnance employed was the 9-inch rifled gun, and the trial was inductive,—that is to say, the gun was stationed 70 yards from the target, and fired with a reduced charge, which, by induction, was believed to produce effects equal to those of a full battering charge at 400 yards. Only two shots were fired. The first shot pierced the front plate, bulged out the middle and back plates, breaking the girders and all the bolts in the vicinity. The second shot tore through the structure, breaking away several feet of the back plate, and smashing so many bolts as to make the shield a wreck. When it is remembered that this havoc was wrought in two shots by a gun which is far from being the most formidable weapon at Shoeburyness,

a more fatal exhibition of the faultiness of the shield could not be desired. Fortunately we now know their worth in time to prevent our soldiers from being immolated behind structures which, if stricken by two or three shots, would scatter their bolts, as deadly as a shower of grape-shot, among all who stood behind them.

Within a few days after the opening of the November session of Parliament, General Dunne elicited from Sir John Pakington a confession that the Gibraltar shield had utterly failed to hold its own against the 9-inch rifled gun. In answer to a pertinent series of questions with which he was subsequently plied by Mr. O'Beirne, the War Minister reluctantly promised that all future trials should be open to the press, and to foreign officers who applied for permission to witness them. Nothing, however, could be more patent than the unwillingness with which Sir John Pakington, as the mouthpiece of the department over which he presides, conceded to the public a permission to be present, which, as he well knew, it was not within his power to withhold. The able correspondent of the Standard, although excluded from the trial-ground upon October the 25th, inferred what its result would be, and described the shield in its wrecked and battered condition as though his eyes were resting upon it as he wrote. But in another portion of his answer to Mr. O'Beirne, the War Minister condescended to employ some special pleading, which, though in all probability put into his mouth by his professional advisers, can scarcely have imposed upon the credulity of any who listened to him. He contended that if the shields sent to Bermuda, Gibraltar, and Malta were admittedly faulty, they could easily be strengthened by adding another layer to them on the spot. It is not denied that if a solid plate 10 inches in thickness were added to the outside of these shields, they would be likely to resist the impact of the 9-inch rifled gun's projectiles. But is it not equally true that a 10-inch plate would resist a 250 shot with or without one of Colonel Inglis's shields to support it? As well might Sir John Pakington plead, when the Warrior's target is perforated, that it would triumphantly resist the same shot if the Hercules' target were placed in front of it. Nor will it be readily credited by any one who knows the resources which Malta, Gibraltar, and Bermuda boast, that, even if 10-inch plates were sent out from England, it would be possible to attach them to the Inglis shields, as Sir John Pakington would have us believe, "on the spot."

We pass by another palliation of these shields on the ground of their cheapness which has been attempted by the friends of their inventor. Nothing which is worthless can, under any circumstances, be economical. The Minister for War has promised that there shall be no more secrecy as regards the trials; that a section of a shield veritably representing that which is in course of erection at Plymouth shall be submitted to test; and that this whole subject shall be inves-

tigated by a committee,—of which, indeed, the members' names have already unofficially appeared,—specially appointed for this purpose. These promises, so far as they go, are good; but if the public vigilance as regards the good faith with which they are kept is relaxed, it were better that they had never been made at all. Nor can the day be far distant when it shall be seriously debated in Parliament whether it is not desirable to appoint a permanent mixed and standing committee, whose province it shall be to determine how the money voted is to be laid out in detail, and to prevent contracts being made, until it has been thoroughly ascertained that the materials contracted for are actually wanted.

As the necessity for our having forts at all is fiercely combated by many officers of ability, and as the experience of the American war pronounces loudly in favour of sand and earth-works, it may not be unprofitable to rehearse at this moment the reasons which have guided the commissioners in their expressed determination, which, as is well known, is favourable to the erection of land forts. Inasmuch as our great means of defence will, after all, be our navy, it is of undoubted importance that our ships should be released from the necessity of keeping guard over vital spots upon our own coast, and should be free to act wherever it is advantageous to injure the enemy. If our naval arsenals are altogether unprotected, a great many ships must be detained from active service to guard them. Assuming that it shall be found possible to construct advanced forts in such positions as to keep the enemy more than four miles off from our dockyards, we shall have gained the obvious advantage of setting our fleet at liberty. But nothing is more certain than that each of these forts must be impregnable, for, in the absence of our fleet, they may, each or any of them, have to stand a concentrated fire poured into them by a hostile armada specially prepared for the express object which it takes in hand. A greater disaster than the loss of such a fort as is now being constructed at Plymouth it would be difficult to conceive. In addition to possessing themselves of all that Plymouth, Devonport, and Keyham now contain, the enemy would have a harbour of refuge capable of holding any number of his ships, and would hold in his hands all the network of railroads which traverse the west of England. It will thus be seen what folly we shall be guilty of if we trust such a centre as Plymouth to the protection of any fort which is not able to withstand far greater power of attack than any which could at present be brought against it. Men who idly conceive that they are accomplishing all that is necessary by barely defying the gun of the present day, and take credit to themselves for preferring a weak to a strong shield, because it costs £500 less, are so utterly unable to appreciate the duty which the country demands from them as to stand self-convicted of presumptuous incapacity.

Now the Plymouth Fort stands close behind the breakwater, which

is sunk in water deep enough to be safely approached by the largest ships now sent to sea. Although the fact has been stated without contradiction in the House of Commons, will it be credited by our readers that, in spite of the memorable annihilation of the granite casemates at Shoeburyness in 1865, Sir John Pakington's professional advisers proposed to place Colonel Inglis's shields upon the top of an unprotected granite foundation, 14 feet thick, and standing 16 feet above the water-line? No one is more ready to extol the advantages which we derive from our experiments at Shoeburyness than the War Minister of the day, especially when he calls upon the House of Commons to make liberal grants for their continuance. But of what account are they when, in the teeth of the warnings which Shoeburyness itself utters, a naked granite base is exposed to the action of projectiles which we know will crumble it all to pieces before 100 shots have been fired? And, as we write, the contractors are still busily engaged in constructing this Plymouth Fort, while laughing in their sleeve at the fatuity of its designers all the time that the work grows under their hands.

We have said enough to show that the promised Committee, however composed, has abundant work cut out for it to do. But, in the judgment of all impartial observers, no good will be effected by it unless the determination to make it a mixed body of civilians and military men be carried out. We shall be greatly surprised if it be not made manifest that we have to thank military jealousy and exclusiveness, and the dogged determination of professional military engineers to resent any interference or advice emanating from men not in the service, for the lamentable imbecility which has been displayed, and for the reckless expenditure of many millions of the nation's funds which has been incurred. And here it may not be unprofitable briefly to report what Russia, the craftiest among the nations of Europe, is herself doing. It may be premised that the wily Muscovite, knowing that we Englishmen are the greatest workers in iron that can anywhere be found, takes care, in times of peace, to enlist in his service the best civilian talent that London, Newcastle-on-Tyne, or Glasgow can afford. In 1864 the Russians erected, at Cronstadt, an iron shield consisting of two layers of armour, the one 15 inches and the other 6 inches in thickness. We understand that they have in contemplation another shield consisting, again, of two layers,—the one 15 inches and the other 9 inches in thickness, with an additional skin of 1½ inch at the back. All these shields are made and to be made in England. It may well be asked whether it is to be endured that we, who are the most skilful artificers in iron that the world contains, should furnish foreign nations with invulnerable forts, while our own shores, and the strong places in our vast colonial empire, are nominally defended by shields which are admitted by all, except, perhaps, Sir John Pakington and their inventor, to be miserable shams.

We have at this moment more than one firm in England which can roll iron plates 15 inches in thickness. Such plates as these are to coat the exterior of some of our Spithead forts, and, if properly backed, are well calculated to protect the embrasures of such forts as the Royal Commissioners have twice recommended for outworks, and will defy, not only the guns of the present, but also all artillery that is likely to be invented for half a century to come.

We have left ourselves but scanty space to descant upon the remarkable "eccentricities," as they have been indulgently termed by the Times, which mark not only the nascent Plymouth Fort, but also the triple lines of fortifications which bristle around the dockyard and arsenal at Portsmouth, and in the advance works at the east and west ends of the Isle of Wight. It has been proudly boasted that no nation ever embarked in times of peace upon so magnificent a work as is disclosed in the great scheme for the Defence of our Dockyards and Naval Arsenals,—a scheme for which, in the main, we have to thank Lord Palmerston and Colonel Jervois. This system of works, imposing enough in the eyes of those who have never seen war on a large scale, is calculated to inspire more terror in the breast of any experienced Englishman who surveys it than in the breasts of the many foreign critics who have been admitted to a sight of it. There are few more impressive views to be seen anywhere on earth than that which awaits the spectator who takes his stand upon the highest elevation of Portsdown Hill, and gazes down upon the vast panorama of the harbour and city of Portsmouth, upon Spithead and the Solent, upon the Isle of Wight and Southampton Water, which lie delineated upon the mighty map stretched out at his feet. Beneath him lie scores upon scores of acres of land and water, studded with forts of every conceivable colour, shape, and material,—forts of iron, granite, Runcorn stone, Portland stone, concrete, chalk, mud, and sand,—forts which every Englishman who gazes upon them instinctively feels will never fire a gun in anger. Nor can it be denied that nothing is more to be deprecated than that either Southwick, Widley, or Nelson,—the three central forts on Portsdown Hill,—or Brockhurst, Rowner, or Grange,—the three principal works of the second line,—should ever be tested by the rough and unmasking experience of war. No one can gaze into the deep chalk ditches which surround the Portsdown Hill forts without seeing that the scarp walls are already gliding in great slices into the ditch, and without imagining what would be the fate of the whole structure if a rapid and angry fire were sustained from 600-pounder guns standing upon the elevated terre-plein of Forts Widley or Nelson. As to the miserably weak caponnières which flank these deep-cut chalk ditches, it will be sufficient to say that they belong to a system already as obsolete as the 68-pounder smooth-bore guns which these forts were originally intended to carry. But coming next to Forts Brockhurst, Rowner, and

Grange, it should never be forgotten that Sir Roderick Murchison warned our military engineers many years ago that it would be impossible to build forts in the spongy soil which has here been selected for their foundation. Neglecting any precautionary measures, disregarding the condition of the site on which their forts were to be raised, our military engineers set to work to pile earth and brick-work upon the top of a quaking morass,—and with what result it is not difficult to imagine. These forts,—for which, by-the-bye, Colonel Jervois is not responsible,—carry guns which, although too small in calibre to be of serious annoyance to an enemy, would be quite big enough, if fired, to lay Forts Brockhurst and Rowner prostrate upon the ground. We have little heart to enlarge upon other grievous errors which the works around Portsmouth and upon the Mersey exhibit,—errors which no advance in the power of artillery, and no improvements in projectiles, can excuse. The Hilsea lines, for example, which cover the only approach to the island of Portsea by road from the mainland, have been years upon years in course of construction, and have already swallowed up more money than it would be delicate to mention in Mr. Gladstone's presence. These lines, nearly 3,000 yards in length, and mounting embrasures for 90 guns, are, in substance, long curtains of earth with casemated batteries on the flank of each curtain. It has now been discovered that the embrasures have been placed so close together that the guns cannot be worked, and every alternate embrasure will have to be built up. Not that even thus would these embrasures, although reduced from 90 to 45, be rendered available for use in their present condition. The falling earth, intended to cushion the brick-face of the casemates, has choked up the mouths of the embrasures, and, viewed in conjunction with the great fissures which have already rent the casemates, leaves upon the mind of the spectator an appalling impression of waste, folly, and decay.

Let us turn, in conclusion, to the contemplation of one branch of this extensive subject which it is possible for us to survey without dismay. In the competitive examination of guns which we have for years been conducting at Shoeburyness, it may, we think, be claimed without arrogance that our rifled guns equal, if they do not surpass, those of any other nation. The Americans have succeeded wonderfully in their construction of large smooth-bore guns, in which the excellent quality of their cast iron specially contributes to their superiority. One of these huge Rodman guns, 15 inches in calibre, weighing 19¼ tons, and carrying a round shot of 450 pounds weight, has been recently purchased by our Government, and by reason of its huge bulk attracts no slight attention at Shoeburyness. The Rodman gun is a cast-iron tube without hoops or strengthening bands of any kind, and is calculated to bear a charge of 60 pounds of powder. It has, however, been repeatedly fired at Shoeburyness with 100 pounds of powder, and at 70 yards it penetrated a target of

8 inches of solid iron; and in addition to its penetration, it demonstrated its "racking" power by driving a huge piece of the punched plate through in front of it. The initial velocity of its shot was 1,535 feet per second, or at the rate of 18 miles per minute. This gun, however, not being rifled, is like all other smooth-bores subject to a very rapid decline in the initial velocity of its shot, and it is calculated that at 500 yards, even though fired with 100 pounds of powder, it would altogether fail to penetrate the 8-inch armour-plate. The Americans have, as we are informed, constructed a very much larger gun with a 20-inch bore, and designed to carry a spherical shot of more than 1,000 pounds weight. No one can deny that, constructed as it is of the incomparable American cast iron, this is a very formidable weapon, especially if it be true that its projectile has attained an initial velocity of 1,400 feet per second. Other guns 30 inches in bore are in course of manufacture on the other side of the Atlantic, but hitherto the Americans have not succeeded in rifling any of their heavy ordnance, and consequently the power of penetrating iron possessed by their guns is very much restricted. What results they might attain if they applied what is known as the Lancaster system of rifling guns to their heavy smooth-bores it is not for us to say.

The largest gun, on the other hand, which is possessed by us, and which is called a 600-pounder, is rifled. This gun weighs 22 tons, has a bore of 13 inches, and carries a shot of about 490 pounds. Its power far exceeds that of the American Rodman, as it has penetrated a 9-inch armour-plate, while it retains its initial velocity for a distance five or six times greater than that of the American gun. We have not, however, succeeded in making any gun of this size which has stood the discharge of 100 rounds without being injured. We have guns, respectively, of 7-inch, 8-inch, 9-inch, and 10-inch bores, all rifled, and carrying projectiles varying from 100 to 300 pounds in weight; the last two being of sufficient power to penetrate the 8-inch target. These guns are intended for our first-class ships, and beyond them we do not at present think it safe to go. The superiority of the rifled gun over the smooth-bore consists, not only in the enormously increased power conferred upon it by its long maintenance of its original initial velocity, but also in the fact that its accuracy of flight far surpasses that of the smooth-bore, even over a very moderate distance, and is retained by it until the end.

These few remarks, disjointedly and superficially thrown together, will not have been written wholly without advantage if they awaken in a few readers some thoughtfulness about the magnitude of these questions, which await solution at the hands of a few military engineers, who are, for the most part, men without actual experience of war. Nothing that we have written is designed to bear hardly, or reflect disadvantageously, upon poor Sir John Pakington. Like most of his predecessors, the present Secretary of State for War does but syllable

in the House of Commons the words put into his mouth by others. A more sensitive or a more penetrating man than Sir John Pakington might, indeed, be apt to resent the indignity to which he is subjected when he is made to stultify himself by making such utterances from his place in Parliament as that "the forts on the banks of the Mersey were abandoned in order that the money with which it had been intended to construct them might be expended upon the Spithead forts." During his recent visit to Liverpool, Sir John Pakington probably discovered for what reasons the forts upon the banks of the Mersey were discontinued. It would be no slight gratification to the public to learn that either his own amour propre, or zeal for the public service, had induced our present Minister of War to administer a rap over the knuckles to the officials who mocked him by putting such words into his mouth. But, be this as it may, nothing is more certain than that the only hope of securing for the future a better administration of public funds than has disgraced the past depends upon the sustained and unremitted vigilance of private members in the House of Commons, and of well-informed writers in the public press. Much credit is already due to Lord Elcho, Mr. O'Beirne, and other members of Parliament, and also to the zeal and acuteness with which the Standard and the Army and Navy Gazette have kept the facts connected with the Malta shields before the public eye. Nothing but advantage can result from an unabated continuation of this discriminating supervision. In the interest of all concerned we can promise that the unquestioning forbearance with which for many years the explanations vouchsafed by Lord Palmerston and the War Department were received by the country will be exchanged henceforth for suspicious and inquisitorial scrutiny, which, and which alone, has been found potential in securing that the honour and safety of England shall be regarded by many of her own servants to be something better than an empty name.

MADAME TALLIEN:

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

Terezia Cabarrus, the subject of the present sketch, was born at Bayonne shortly before the breaking out of the great Revolution in which she came to be so prominent an actor. Her father, a Spanish banker and merchant, owed his social position entirely to his wealth. Terezia may be said to have been born a "beauty," so early is her extraordinary loveliness recorded. Her girlhood was passed between Bayonne and Madrid; but neither the sunny solitude of the provincial town nor the stately aristocracy of Madrid sufficed to procure this parvenue Venus the homage for which she craved. Paris alone was a shrine worthy of such a divinity, and to Paris she came in order to finish her education. What species of education this might be, judging from her subsequent career, we need not inquire.

The time was one of unexampled freedom, both of manners and of speech. In the early days of the Revolution all the old landmarks suddenly disappeared, and a species of social chaos succeeded. Chastity ceased to be a charm in woman, and honour was no longer indispensable in man. The nation was fast hurrying towards that reckless cynicism which culminated in the worship of the Goddess of Reason, as personified by undraped beauty. Never had France declaimed so loudly about virtue, patriotism, and brotherly love, and never had public faith and private character sunk to so low an ebb. The horrors of the Revolution had not yet commenced, the king still tottered on his throne, and the presence of a dissolute and brilliant aristocracy but ill-concealed the turbulent elements seething under the glittering surface. The beautiful Terezia, early introduced into this dissolute society, but too readily lent herself to its fatal temptations. Her extraordinary beauty, of the purest Spanish type, as well as her remarkable grace, somewhat melodramatic withal, at once marked her as an object of more than admiration to the sated voluptuaries and courtly sinners among whom she lived. Like Herodias she danced deliciously, and like Sappho she sang divinely; she could also understand the language of love in three different tongues. An aged Don Juan, by name De Fontenay, an aristocrat and a marquis, who, under the mask of extreme gravity and the most polished manners, concealed every vice of his type, was at once attracted by Terezia, and married her. Great fêtes at his chateau near Paris inaugurated this mercenary alliance, which was but the first step in her downward career. As the Marquise de Fon-

tenay she was placed on a social pedestal even in that exclusive aristocracy which, in those undeveloped days of liberty, was still considered de rigueur. Her beauty now belonged to the Court and the Court circle, and she readily found round her a society as brilliant and attractive as it was hollow and dissolute. Illusions of all kinds were the order of the day, freedom joined with absolute servility to caste, personal vice under the mask of national virtue, loyalty disguising revolutionary intrigues, patriotism in a worn-out and effete society, incapable of a single new emotion or noble sentiment. In this unreal and vile entourage reigned supreme the dissipated marquise and her aged proprietor.

But, as of old, they eat, they drank, they married, and were given in marriage, until the flood came and swallowed them up. Thus was this artificial and depraved world engulphed by the first waves of that social deluge, the great Revolution! Our parvenue marquise and her aged spouse at once collapsed, and, as they had been foremost in the ranks of folly and of exclusiveness, were foremost in flight from the inevitable fate awaiting all aristocrats. She had come from the south; to the south they fled for refuge, across the desolate landes of the Gironde, where nature, scarce and arid in external features, furnished so rich a harvest of loyal sons destined to sacrifice their lives in a noble endeavour to rescue France from tyranny and bloodshed. Tracked and arrested, the De Fontenays were carried off prisoners to Bordeaux, where the same drama of horrors was being enacted, on a smaller theatre, as at Paris, under the management of the unscrupulous young proconsul, Tallien, sent down from the central clubs to superintend and legalise massacre. Ready-witted, swift-penned, and ambitious, he was one of those unwholesome human funguses generated in the hotbed of the Revolution. He had been ready, up to the time of his appointment as state-butcher at Bordeaux, to join any party, however sanguinary, which for the moment gained the ascendency. He may not have been naturally as cruel as his compeers, Collot d'Herbois, Marat, or Robespierre,—indeed, his subsequent acts would almost make the accusation of cruelty appear unjust;—but he was cruel enough to sacrifice any amount of lives for the advancement of his personal ambition. Not until the nation was disgusted with the brutalities of Robespierre, and mercy and peace became the fashion, did Tallien cease to be cruel, making mercy serve as a stepping-stone to love and power. His reputation as a prominent member of the Jacobins stood, however, at this time, high. He had mainly contributed to the horrors of the 10th of August. He had been brutally foremost in persecuting the unhappy prisoners of the Temple, denying them the poor comfort of mutual communication, and not only voting for the death of the king, but calling on the Convention to carry out the sentence on that very day, with a noisy vehemence and a reckless unconcern which shocked even his Jacobite brethren.

He had come to Bordeaux, not only to establish there the Revolutionary committees, but also to pursue to the death, among their arid plains and poverty-stricken homes, the unhappy Girondists. Up to this time Tallien had discharged his barbarous mission with every atrocity of which he was capable, and the city guillotine was, by his orders, erected in the great square, opposite the windows of the Prefecture, his residence, enabling him personally to superintend and enjoy the executions. Before this young proconsul appeared Terezia Cabarrus, accused as an enemy of the Convention.

With the name of Tallien opens the second act of Terezia's romantic career. It is indeed to his name, coupled with her beauty, that she owes the celebrity her otherwise commonplace character has acquired. Thrice in Paris she had previously met him: once in the studio of Madame le Brun, the artist; a second time in the garden of Alexander Lameth, when he presented her with a bunch of white roses, symbolical of her merciful influence over him; again, in the Convention, where his loud and daring speech, his dramatic action, and imposing presence, made him, at twenty-four, a central figure. When, with her husband, she was flung into the filthy prison provided for proscribed royalists, where she afterwards declared the rats had gnawed her feet, she little imagined that this darkest night was to be followed by so brilliant a dawn.

It is said that when Tallien was told who had become his prisoner, he was greatly moved, and ordered that she should at once appear before him. Phryne before her judges did not produce a more overwhelming emotion than this lovely Spaniard of twenty before this Brutus of twenty-four. She came, was seen, and conquered. Those were days when all the world was young and giddy,—men, women, ideas, politics, principles. Youth and a desire for novelty, joined to hatred and contempt of the past, were great incentives to the Revolution. Terezia's soft eyes turned with pathetic earnestness on Tallien; her glorious hair, "long as a king's mantle," hung in disorder around her. "You know me," said she. "Yes, citizen; why have you come to Bordeaux?" "Because every one is in prison at Paris." "Of what are you accused, and why are you here with the ci-devant Marquis de Fontenay? Are you attempting to emigrate?" "No," replied Terezia; "I am a republican already; we were on our way to Spain to visit my father." "Your trial shall at once take place. If you are innocent——." "Great Heaven!" cried she. "Trial! then we are already condemned. I, the wife of an aristocrat and a marquis, what hope have I?" Her soft hand fell, as if involuntarily, on Tallien's arm. He started and coloured. "You are wrong, citizen; we do not assassinate in the name of the law." He took her hand in his and kissed it. "What can I do for you?" said he. "Set me at liberty; give De Fontenay his liberty." "Oh, as for him, I shall certainly not interfere. I believed you desired to be divorced."

"Perhaps I do; perhaps I am divorced; but, at all events, I would liberate him." She threw herself on her knees before Tallien. "Rise, citizen!" said he, encircling her with his arms as he raised her; "I am playing my head, but, no matter, you are free."

Madame de Fontenay, as we will call her for the last time, announced to the marquis that he might depart, but that she remained at Bordeaux as his hostage. Under the rosy colouring of this encounter on "delicate ground," we are to understand that Tallien plainly offered Terezia the choice of his love or death. His ardent passion may really have found some echo in her own heart. She was disgusted and weary of her vicious old husband, divorce was easy, love begets love, and her life was on the balance. That Tallien was at least sincere, his whole after-life sufficiently proves. Next day the divorce was formally announced and duly legalised.

Without inquiring too curiously into the motives of this sudden change, we must now shift the scene, and behold the ci-devant marquise relapsed into the full-blown parvenue, reigning supreme as revolutionary Venus in much-enduring and trembling Bordeaux. Seated by the side of the proconsul, flaunting through the streets in gaudy equipages, assisting at the tribunal, foremost in processions, adored, powerful, beautiful; laying, indeed, the foundation of that notoriety which subsequently gained for her the title of "Madame Thermidor," by which she is still known, she ever filled the public eye. What became of her aged husband does not appear, history not considering him worthy of further notice than to record that he was liberated. Perhaps he lived to join in the triumphs of his once-wife, perhaps he fled into Spain; but he appears, at all events, quietly to have accepted his fate, whatever that might have been, and, like an actor whose part terminates early in the drama, he quits the scene to appear no more.

But Madame Tallien, as we must henceforth call her, adapts herself with marvellous versatility to her new position; indeed, her present position was one much more congenial to her nature than the rigid etiquette of the old régime. From the people she had risen, to the people she returned. She sympathised with them, and they with her, admiring and applauding her to the echo. Bordeaux became to her a vast stage on which she daily strutted to gratify her own vanity and the curiosity of the canaille. As to Tallien, like the voluptuous Antony, he was but her lieutenant. She was one of those women that nature creates now and then, to whom beauty is absolute power, born to govern those who govern the world, to tyrannise over tyrants. Such are the Cleopatras, the Theodoras of history, and such was our Terezia. She went forth like death, conquering and to conquer.

It is pleasant to record that her reign was one of mercy. The odious guillotine no longer encumbered the neighbourhood of the Prefecture. She would not live there, she said, until it was removed.

When she sat on the tribunal by the side of Tallien, she was blessed as an angel of mercy, the emptying prisons and moderate judgments being recognised as the result of her influence. The male parvenu having found his mate, they acted and re-acted favourably on each other. Her beauty, grace, and natural amiability humanised the amorous Tallien, who was without fixed principles of any sort. Exaggerations of all kinds being the order of the day, her popularity rapidly increased, until it reached a species of fury. When she appeared in a riding-habit, with hat, tricolour, and feathers, and pronounced patriotic orations in the church of the Ricolets, or drove in a golden car about the streets, draped in a white clamyde, lance in hand, the red cap of liberty on her head, she but identified herself with the spirit of the time. So easily do men's minds, especially in France, lend themselves to the sequence of events, however caricatured and unnatural they may become! A change so sudden in the conduct of Tallien could not long escape either the observation or animadversion of the Convention, who by no means appreciated the fascinating influence of Terezia with the same enthusiasm as the Bordelais. Her devotion to Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, was joined to inconvenient heresies on the subject of mercy and pardon, and Robespierre, duly advertised of the measures of the young proconsul, frowned ominously, and commanded his immediate return to Paris. Madame Tallien followed him—a proof either of her devotion or her vanity. Up to that time her beauty had secured her so triumphant a career that she may have contemplated subjugating Robespierre and all the Jacobins as easily as she had seduced the facile Tallien.

Robespierre desired, in recalling Tallien to Paris, first to discredit, and then to ruin him. St. Just sarcastically alluded to Samson's locks shorn by the fair Dalilah, and declared that Tallien had not only ceased to be a patriot, but was actually an enemy to the holy cause of the republic. Great, therefore, was the chagrin of his enemies when Tallien was at once chosen President of the Convention, and became the leader of a powerful party opposed to the Reign of Terror. Between these two,—Tallien and Robespierre,—life or death hung in the balance—life to France, and the true principles of the Revolution if Tallien prevailed—death, utter, universal bloodshed and death, not only to the nation, but to the cause of liberty, if Robespierre effected his avowed purpose of becoming Dictator.

But underlying all this apparent patriotism, the most potent personal feelings prompted Tallien, who in good truth was what I have already called him,—a modern Antony. Terezia, his beloved, arrested by the express order of Robespierre, lay at that very time in the filthy prison of La Force, having failed in her attempt to fascinate the Convention, before whom she pronounced a florid oration, craving to be allowed to devote herself to poverty and obscurity. Robespierre

still feared to strike openly at Tallien, but wounded him secretly through his love.

From this moment it was a hand to hand struggle btween them, and on the life of Terezia hung the destinies of France. These admirable actors ceased to attitudinise, and flung themselves body and soul into the drama. Tallien, maddened by the treachery of Robespierre, appealed to the Convention. "Long," said he, "I have silently borne calumnies and injustice, but the time is come when I will no longer be silent. The name of a woman has been mentioned in this assembly. I cannot understand why she should occupy the attention of the Convention. She has been called the daughter of Cabarrus. I declare in the face of the world, and in the midst of my colleagues, this woman is my wife. I have long known her; and I saved her life at Bordeaux. Her virtues, her misfortunes, endeared her to me. She followed me to Paris in the times of tyranny and of oppression, and she has been sentenced to a prison. An emissary of the tyrant came to her tempting her: 'Confess that you know Tallien to be an enemy to liberty; sign it, and you shall have liberty and a passport.' 'I am but twenty years old,' she replied, 'but I would rather die a hundred times.'" Twice Robespierre is said to have refused Tallien the life of Terezia. Tallien, who still hesitated, uncertain how far he dared to beard the tyrant, had no choice but to proceed. Robespierre, with the inevitable bouquet in his hand, meeting him in the street, laughed at him, and told him to beware of woman. "Is that your last word?" cried Tallien. Robespierre bowed, sniffed his flowers delicately, and passed on.

In the meantime Terezia, attended by jailers and guarded by certain monstrous bloodhounds kept at La Force, who, after smelling each prisoner, prevented any chance of escape, found herself in a blackened cell, furnished with some damp straw and a mattress. Her beauty had failed her. Robespierre was inexorable, Tallien powerless, death inevitable. But she was not alone. Josephine, then Countess of Beauharnais, and the Duchess d'Aiguillon, shared the mattress and the straw. The cell where they lay was noted as the scene of the massacre of the priests by the Septembrionists, and their names, as well as the marks in blood of two sabres which had leant against the damp walls, reminded them of their fate. Poor butterfly Terezia, how did she bear it? She owned subsequently that she grew accustomed to horrors,—she sang and told stories while her companions read or worked at their needle. With their scissors and the teeth of their combs they wrote on the wall—"Oh, Liberty!" "We shall leave soon;" "What is death when we are already in torment?" and added their names—"Citoyenne Tallien," "Josephine de Beauharnais," "D'Aiguillon."

Terezia was allowed, as a special favour, to walk after nightfall in the court of the prison. She knew not to whom she owed this privi-

lege, but she guessed it was to Tallien, and her heart leaped as she imagined him watching over her. Where was he? Would he save her? Did he love her enough to venture his life for her? As she walked up and down, lost in thought, the flickering moon lighting up the walls and the backs of the adjoining houses, a stone fell at her feet. Round the stone was a paper written in printed letters, but under the disguise she recognised the hand of Tallien. "At least, he watches over me," cried she. "I am at hand," said the writing; "every evening, at nine o'clock, you will go into the court; I shall be near you." She looked up to the roofs of the houses, she examined each window, she tried to penetrate every shadow under the pale moonlight; all was dark and still,—not a sound but the beating of her own heart and the baying of the ferocious hounds broke the silence. Eight days running did Tallien,—there, at this hour, when the prison lights were extinguished,—communicate with her. Afterwards she was forbidden to descend into the court. Robespierre's spies had discovered that Tallien rented a granary near at hand, and came there every night to console his imprisoned love. Eternal night seemed closing around her. Day after day the hollow sounds of the tumbrils bearing prisoners to execution echoed through the cells. Tallien was either powerless or had forgotten her. She would not die without telling him that she held him for a coward and a renegade. What was he doing? Did he not know,—he, the head of a powerful party,—that each hour might be her last? She waited until the 7th Thermidor, when the jailer told her she need not make her bed, for that her turn was come for execution. Yet Tallien gave no sign. On the 4th Thermidor Tallien received a dagger. He knew it well. He had often seen it in the hands of Terezia Cabarrus. On the 7th, two days after, the following letter reached him, dated from La Force;—"The superintendent of police has just left. He came to announce that I shall be called to the tribunal—that is to say, the scaffold—to-morrow. This news but little coincides with a dream I had last night. Robespierre was dead, and the prisons open; but, thanks to your incredible cowardice, no one will soon be found in France able to realise this."

The same day Tallien replied to her;—"Be as prudent as I am courageous, but calm yourself." No one could be calm at such a moment; the sword hung over her head. Spite of Terezia's stinging reproach of cowardice, Tallien was boldly heading a conspiracy against Robespierre's life. He knew that his name stood first in that tyrant's list for execution. He waited but an opportune moment openly to attack him in the Convention. True, that in the meantime Terezia might have been ordered to execution; but Tallien acted not alone, and however ready he was to sacrifice his own life for hers, he was powerless without his colleagues.

On the 7th Thermidor, at the moment that Tallien received Terezia's letter, Robespierre passed the entire day alone at the Hermitage in

the depths of the forest of Montmorency. For hours he sat deep in thought, leaning against the paling of the little garden once cultivated by Rousseau, his face paler and more livid than usual. Did he despair or hope? Did that ghastly look indicate remorse or ambition, or was he collecting himself to meet the struggle now inevitable? None can reply—a hypocrite has no confidant. Each of these men declared that he fought only for his country; but Robespierre's patriotism meant absolute power as dictator;—Tallien's was the possession of the fair Terezia.

On the 8th Thermidor, the last of the so-called "days of Terror," Robespierre, dressed in his blue coat, nankeen trousers, lace cravat, and bouquet in hand, went down to the Convention to pronounce the great oration he had long meditated. "Citizens," said he, "I leave to others flattering words. I am come to tell you sterner truths. I come to defend outraged authority and liberty violated. I have been represented as the author of every evil. I have been called a tyrant. And why? Because I have dared to speak the truth. What am I? A slave of liberty,—a living martyr to the republic,—the victim as well as the enemy of crime." From defence he passes rapidly to accusation. He spares no one; he sheds his venom around like a malignant reptile; he prepares hecatombs of victims by his insidious accusations. At length he has finished. There is absolute silence; not a voice, not a hand is raised to applaud him. He is asked to name the traitors to whom he has alluded. He replies with hesitation that he has endeavoured rather to expose abuses than to name individuals. He is interrupted. "You who pretend to the courage of virtue at least have the courage of truth;" and cries of "Name! name!" shake the very walls. A debate too famous among the annals of history to be reported here follows. At last Tallien rises. "The republic is in such danger," says he, "that every true citizen must be affected by it. A member of the government denounces his colleagues. This is an aggravation of evil. I demand that the veil be torn aside." Three times did the entire assembly—all, save the friends of Robespierre—receive these significant words with thundering applause. Cries of "Down with the tyrant!" are heard from all sides. Robespierre, livid with fury, rises from his seat, and vainly endeavours to mount the stairs of the tribune. He hangs on by the rails; he cannot speak; he is overwhelmed.

Again Tallien rises. "I asked that the veil should be torn aside. I see that it is done. The real conspirators are unmasked. I knew that my life was threatened, but I was silent, until, present at the sitting of the Jacobins, I saw the army of this new Cromwell forming around him. I trembled for my country, and I armed myself with a dagger to stab him to the heart if the Convention lacked the courage to impeach him." As he spoke Tallien drew forth Terezia's dagger. She was avenged, and Robespierre had fallen.

Again we find her the parvenue queen of a parvenue society. Her innate vanity and love of notoriety re-asserted themselves, and she parades her beauty and her toilette, and forms her salon as of old. The stage is larger; it is Paris instead of Bordeaux, but all genuine feeling and emotion have died out, and her essentially vulgar and melodramatic nature re-asserts itself. This Goddess of Beauty receives her worshippers at a charming cottage embosomed in greenery and flowers, painted within and without (as a stage cottage ought to be), situated on the banks of the Seine. The young men of that day, called "the golden youths," flocked around her. They were presumptuous beyond the permitted insolence of youth, and extraordinarily ignorant, for the Revolution had forced boys into men, and rendered a regular education impossible. Licentiousness and debauchery succeeded to isolation and terror. No longer in daily fear of death, every evil passion was unchained; they drank, they gambled, they fought duels, and talked in a jargon quite peculiar to themselves. They came in strange attire, these golden youths, contrasting strangely with the mean, and even dirty clothes worn during the Terror, when Robespierre was so singular in his new blue coat and general cleanliness. The Ladies or "Incroyables," but lately emerging from the prison of La Force or the Conciergerie, "strictly after the antique," as designed by David, the painter, draped, not dressed, displayed even more than decency permitted. Madame Tallien, who had called her fellow-prisoners, Madame Beauharnais and the Duchess d'Aiguillon, to her side, led the fashion. Like Venus, she wore golden sandals on her naked feet, and tore her gloves early in the evening in order to appear more like a goddess. They were bewitching, these divinities, very theatrical, very unreal; but the time was out of joint, and they suited it. By-and-by came the beautiful Madame Recamier, and Madame de Staël, and Hoche, and Barras, and Buonaparte,—wonderfully handsome, this young Buonaparte, and strikingly like the bust of young Augustus, divided between the charm of Josephine Beauharnais, whom he soon after married, and Madame Tallien. There were concerts at which republican generals, ci-devant members of "the Mountain," and "the Jacobites" familiar with the click of the guillotine, made sweet music along with cherubim, Mehul and Rhode; and there were causeries when Buonaparte, yielding, like Hercules, to beauty, did not spin, but kissed Madame Tallien's hand, and pressing it within his own, told her fortune. Barras also desired to be foremost among her worshippers. They danced too, those three loving friends, Madames Tallien, Beauharnais, and Recamier, Attic dances after the majestic and classical manner, performing evolutions with Greek chlamydes, "high and disposedly," to the delight of "the golden youths" and the generals and statesmen, who all regretted even the scanty chlamydes, so much were they

otherwise attired "by the grace of God." Some one has called this "the Age of Muslin," and it is well named.

At last, the painted cottage on the banks of the Seine became too small for her adorers, and we find her removed to Paris and receiving a painted fan, "presented by the Directory."

But the reign of frivolity, exaggeration, and ignorance, presided over by our Beauty crowned with cap and bells, could not last for ever. Neither she nor Tallien were gifted with talents equal to the occasion. He gradually lost political power, was excluded from the Directory, and came to be overshadowed by Barras. She, essentially the offspring of a disordered period, a gilded butterfly, possessed no mental gifts to retain the influence with which her beauty and peculiar circumstances alone had invested her. Bitterly did she reproach the once-loved Tallien for allowing the government he had himself established to slip from his grasp; bitterly did Tallien deplore the loss of her social influence, on which he had too entirely reckoned as a preservative of power. The world was growing serious, great wars thundered in the distance, the actions of patriotic generals occupied general attention. By degrees the golden youth became older and wiser, the women, less like actresses, grew at last into ladies. The salons of our poor Beauty were deserted. Madame de Staël robbed her of the litterateurs and the diplomates. Madame Recamier equalled her in beauty, and exceeded her in fashion and virtue. She became rococco,—a crime unpardonable in Paris. Before his marriage with Josephine, Buonaparte devoted himself to her, and even is said to have proposed a divorce from Tallien; but whether she repulsed him, or whether he found her too commonplace and frivolous to realise the splendid rôle he already in imagination destined for his consort, he now became as marked in his dislike as he had been in his admiration, and Josephine,—installed in the Tuileries,—was forbidden to receive Madame Tallien, obliging that excellent creature to meet her former benefactress by stealth.

Madame Recamier, a very dragon of virtue, now declined all further relations with the equivocal heroines of the Revolution, especially with Madame Tallien, who was not in her opinion "respectable;" and she boldly sets forth in her memoires that "she never knew her," spite of chlamydes and Attic dances. And Tallien? He still loved his Terezia ardently; she was to him the same enchantress as of old; he would have borne loss of power or loss of anything but of her! She, on the contrary, cared for him but as a means, not as an end. Of very equivocal virtue, and incapable of any real attachment whatever, a beautiful mask rather than a true woman, unstable, vain, frivolous, ungrateful, she recklessly flung aside the man who, armed by her dagger, killed the Revolution to save her. She sued for a divorce. Tallien, powerless and forsaken, begged to be allowed to accompany Buonaparte to Egypt as a savant. He afterwards was

appointed consul at Alicante, and died poor, blind, and solitary. But if there exist a social Nemesis for domestic crimes, Tallien was amply avenged. Again she sought, a third time, a fresh stage whereon to display her somewhat matured charms. No semblance of love is even suggested in her third marriage with the Prince de Chimay; it was simply a clever speculation. The name of Tallien with its unfortunate possessor had fallen into disgrace; the virtuous ladies of the Directory took occasion to animadvert somewhat freely on certain passages in Terezia's former life; there was an awkward vacuum between the Marquise de Fontenay and Madame Tallien. A link was wanting in the matrimonial chain, very painful to the feelings of these scrupulous dames. In the excitement of the Revolution, when men and women lived on from day to day a fevered existence between prison and the guillotine, these little discrepancies and legal flaws mattered not at all. But now that society had sobered down into conventional forms, and the Reign of Terror was forgotten, people had time to think, and ask each other questions; the answers not being in Madame Tallien's case altogether satisfactory. She was now politically and socially powerless, she could neither cajole nor crush her accusers. When, therefore, Joseph de Caraman, Prince de Chimay, peer of Hainault, and grandee of Spain, offered her his hand, Equality and Fraternity, Democracy and Republicanism, were forgotten, and she emerged again as Princess de Chimay on that social stage she loved so well to fill. Beautiful as she still was, she believed that exalted rank, like charity, covers a multitude of sins, and would force social consideration. She was cruelly deceived. Her third and last appearance in public was an utter failure, and the memory of poor forsaken Tallien was amply avenged. Spite of the magnificence of the Château of Chimay, and the brilliant artistic society assembled to amuse its ever-attractive Chatelaine; spite of the winters in Brussels, and gorgeous display of luxury and wealth, Terezia was unable to appear at Court, where, as the Prince held the post of chamberlain to King William, her absence was the more conspicuous. The frantic efforts she made to obtain admittance, the genuine expression in her letters of humiliation and almost despair, are undeniable proofs of the tortures she suffered, and how effectually they embittered every day and hour of her life. A plaintive sadness creeps over this once triumphant beauty. Accusations and calumnies, strengthened by the royal taboo, accumulate around her; as years advance her former life clings to her like Dejanira's robe, and cannot be torn away. She struggles in vain, the gates of Paradise are closed to her, and after years spent in social diplomacy she is told that the queen still refuses to receive her. Thus was Terezia Cabarrus overtaken by an avenging Nemesis, and died under a punishment most terrible to her as a beauty, most justly deserved as a heartless woman, the ban of social ostracism.

THE COST OF COAL.

Pile up the blazing fire
Warm to our heart's desire,
Let those who like inquire
How hard the frost is;
But as the pleasant glow
Quickens our spirits' flow,
Surely we ought to know
How much the cost is!

Not the cash price per ton;
But how the coal is won;
What manful work is done
By nerve and daring;
How much in mortal strain,
Wearing out heart and brain,
How much in grief and pain,
Tears and despairing!

Think of the miner's toil,
Fathoms beneath the soil,
Long hours of weary moil,
Working by one light;
Patient and strong and brave,
Oft in that dismal cave,
Digging himself a grave,
Far from the sunlight.

Think what a dreary time!
Ever he breathes a clime
Heavy with heat and grime,
Through every season;
Burrows through fields of coal,
More as a giant mole,
Than as with human soul,
Guided by reason.

Works, as his lot is cast;
Works till some fatal blast
Spreads, as it rushes past,
Fear and amazement.
Needless his fate to tell,
Cramped in his narrow cell
Knowing, alas! too well,
What that quick blaze meant.

Hundreds of workers round
Know that the cruel sound,
Echoing under ground,
Finds them defenceless;
Useless their safety lamp,
Too late their hurried tramp,
Caught by the fiery damp,
Shattered and senseless.

Vainly they seek the shaft,
Either by strength or craft
Swifter the deadly draught
Covers the distance.
Lying, with pallid face,
Each on the very place
Where he gave up the race,
Run for existence.

Pity those sturdy men,
Ne'er to see home again,
Hearty and hopeful when
Leaving that morning;
Working in endless gloom,
Meeting an awful doom,
Sent to an early tomb—
Sent without warning.

Not many hours before,
Each at his cottage door
Parted from those who bore
Names that are dearest;
Having no thought nor fear
That the dark hour was near
When would be broken here
Ties of the nearest:

Never to meet on earth
Her who gave life its worth,
Sharing his grief and mirth,
Seeking his pleasure;
Never again to see
Children in happy glee,
Climbing about his knee,
Brightening his leisure.

Quickly the news has spread
Through the town overhead;
Not many words are said,
All whisper sadly.
Gallant men, good and brave,
Hoping, at least, to save
Some from a living grave,
Venture down gladly.

Round that devoted pit
Groups of mute women sit,
Loth the sad spot to quit,
Hoping, still hoping.
While the men working there
Do all that heroes dare,
Through the dark poisoned air
Painfully groping.

Fearful the risks they run
Ere their sad duty done,
Gives the dead, one by one,
Back to their near ones,
Watching, with straining eyes,
As those still figures rise,
Dreading to recognise
One or more dear ones.

Piercing the wail and loud
Wrung from that stricken crowd;
Wives with their faces bowed,
Sisters, and mothers;
Bitter the tears they shed
Over those quiet dead,
Winners of daily bread,
Husbands and brothers.

Think of their severed lives,
Scarcely a man survives;
Pity their weeping wives,
Wives now no longer.
Dry the lone widow's tear,
Calm the sad mother's fear,
Cherish her children dear
Till they grow stronger.

Ever on wintry nights,
As the bright fire and lights—
Where are more pleasant sights?—
Make the room cheerful,
Spare one kind pitying thought,
How the deep mine is wrought,
With what dark perils fraught,
Sudden and fearful.

Then, to sum up the whole,
Paid as the price of coal,
Add to the gloomy roll
What the life lost is;
Think that each miner's fate
Leaves a home desolate,
Then you may estimate
How much the cost is.

ALPINE CLIMBING.

Some future philosopher may turn aside from more important topics to notice the rise and development of the passion for mountain-climbing. He may pick up, in that humble field of inquiry, illustrations of some principles of wider application. The growth of the passion is accompanied, for example, if it is not caused, by the growth of the modern appreciation of mountain scenery; and few things would be more interesting, in proper time and place, than to investigate the real meaning of that curious phenomenon. Meanwhile we will endeavour to point out another, and a humbler, lesson, upon which our imaginary philosopher may, if he pleases, insist. The history of mountaineering is, to a great extent, the history of the process by which men have gradually conquered the phantoms of their own imagination. We read in our school-days of certain rash barbarians who entered the majestic presence of the senators of Rome. For a long time they were awe-struck by the reverend air and the long white beards of the old men, and remained quiescent, as though petrified by a supernatural terror. At length an accident revealed that the senators were mortal like themselves, the superstitious fears vanished, and the barbarians proceeded, according to their pleasant custom, to massacre the objects of their late reverence.—Which things are an allegory. There is many a venerable political institution that has imposed upon the imaginations of mankind, until some bold man ventured, as Mr. Carlyle says, to take it by the beard, and say, What art thou? Whereupon it has suddenly collapsed. We will not, on the present occasion, pursue our argument into such lofty regions. It will be quite enough to illustrate the doctrine by the particular case of mountaineering exploits, and to leave our readers to invent such applications as they please. If we were writing a complete record we should have to show, in relating the development of mountaineering, how at first men stood appalled at the savage terrors of the Alps; how gradually they came nearer, and found that the mountains were haunted by no terrible phantoms; and how, when the bolder boys had ventured into the haunted house and come back unscathed, there followed a general rush, into its furthest recesses, of a crowd of followers—perhaps gifted with equal courage, but certainly with less to try it. And we should further have to explain that, though the fanciful terrors had proved groundless, there were still some very real dangers to be encountered. At present we must

be content with a few remarks upon the most prominent events in the annals of climbing.

For centuries, as we need hardly say, the human mind was in a state of utter darkness as to the merits of mountaineering. Doubtless a few chamois-hunters and goatherds wandered over the slopes of the hills, and found therein a mysterious pleasure, of which they could give no clear account to themselves or to others. If we turn over the pages of any of the early works which treat of the Alps, we find in them a few scattered notices derived from such peasants and hunters who had evidently a fine natural turn for enlarging upon the wonders of their country to the few who would listen to their tales. It is enough to mention a distinguished traveller at the beginning of the last century, named Scheuchzer, whose state of mind may be inferred from a single statement. He labours to prove that such things as dragons really exist, and the principal ground of his argument is the strong à priori probability that, in so savage a country as the Central Alps, there must be dragons. Considering that Scheuchzer lived at Zurich, within sight of some lofty peaks, he must have had a strange terror of a region, at his very door, so savage, in his opinion, that it could not but produce dragons,—dragons being the natural product of its own intrinsic ferocity. Soon after Scheuchzer's travels, the Alpine mania seems to have begun. Pocock and Wyndham discovered Chamouni; and it became the fashion, as Gibbon tells us, towards the end of the century, "to view the glaciers." The great start, however, is due to Saussure, whom all true mountaineers revere as the founder of their craft. The year 1786, in which the summit of Mont Blanc was for the first time reached by his guide Balmat, should be the year one in their calendar; and if it were marked by saints' days, the festivals of Saussure and Balmat would be the chief solemnities of the year. Although Balmat and Saussure thus climbed the highest European mountain, the imaginative prestige of the Alps was still enormous. Balmat must have been a first-rate mountaineer, and possessed of unusual strength and toughness of constitution. Saussure himself performed at least one feat which has scarcely been equalled in its way, when he lived for ten days on the top of the Col du Géant, appearing as a magician to the inhabitants of the valley below. Yet the mode in which Saussure and Balmat set about the ascent of Mont Blanc is to the system of modern travellers what the old warfare, with its marchings and countermarchings, and going into winter quarters, was to the audacious tactics of Napoleon. As an old-fashioned general thought he had made a good campaign when he had advanced a few miles and taken a fortress or two in the course of the summer, so Saussure attacked Mont Blanc in due form, with gradual approaches and operations, extending over years. He threw out reconnaissances, established lodgments in the flanks of the mountain, and at last moved to the

assault with an army of eighteen guides, spending three days in reaching the summit, and returning to Chamouni on the fourth. One assault was repulsed by "the reverberation of the sun from the snow;" after that a party of men having passed all the real difficulties, shrank back from the last and really easy bit of ascent; and it was not till a quarter of a century after Saussure had offered a reward for the discovery of a path to the summit, that the first ascent was actually made. Everything shows, as we have said, that the mountaineers of those days were as good on their legs, as sound in their lungs, and fully as courageous as their modern successors; but they could not overcome their instinctive dread in the presence of the Monarch of Mountains.

Saussure opened what may be called the scientific era of mountain ascents, which lasted sixty or seventy years. During that time, that is, till about 1850, there were indeed many ascents made without any pretence of scientific motives, and probably many with nothing but the pretence. The great mountains of the Bernese Oberland, the Jungfrau, and the Finster-Aarhorn, were climbed, and many ascents were made of Mont Blanc, chiefly, as we may venture to say, "for the fun of the thing." The leaders in discoveries were, however, still the men of science. Towards the end of the period, especially, Professors Agassiz, Desor, and other distinguished Swiss mountaineers, and our countryman, Professor Forbes, did a great deal to open up the districts of eternal snow for less eminent travellers, whilst their principal motive was to investigate the theory of glaciers. During all that time, however, mountain ascents were becoming popular for their own sakes. The view which was generally taken of the amusement may be measured by the respect still felt for Mont Blanc. The hold which that noble summit retained upon the imagination is a kind of barometer of the height reached by the mountaineering art. It was still the fashion to attack him after the mode commemorated by Albert Smith. Each traveller had four guides and four porters; the guides went to mass and took leave of their relatives before the start; guns were fired at critical moments; the whole tourist population turned out to watch the ascent; and a dinner was solemnly eaten and toasts duly drunk after the adventurers had returned to the bosom of their families. To have been up Mont Blanc was a sufficient excuse for publishing a book, and the curious in such matters may study sundry small publications of this kind. They are generally thin pamphlets with fearful illustrations. The party is represented at breakfast on a large block of ice, which is balanced in doubtful equilibrium across a yawning chasm which presumably descends for hundreds of feet into the bowels of the earth; or a bending ladder supports the whole party across a tremendous gulf, into which a single false step—— we need not finish the quotation. In Albert Smith's lectures, the speaker abandoned his jokes and puns,

and became terribly serious as he described the horrors of the final climb, that being a matter much too serious for even a professional wit to touch without, as the reporters say, being "visibly affected." The modern tourist rather apologises for having any feelings at all under similar circumstances, and pokes fun at his readers at the most thrilling passages of his narrative.

But now a new era was approaching. The task of analysing all the causes by which it was produced must be left to the unfortunate being for whom so many endless puzzles are proposed,—the philosophical historian. The sect of muscular Christians was arising; it had not yet developed a dogmatic theory, nor appeared in the pulpit or in novels with a purpose; but its future heroes were beginning to stir themselves, and to leaven the world imperceptibly with some portion of their spirit. Their energy in the mountain districts was perceptible in introducing what we may call the transitional era between the ancient and modern forms of the art. Two or three publications revealed their existence to the outer world. Of these we may specially mention two interesting volumes which both appeared in 1856. One was the "Wanderings in the High Alps," by Mr. Wills, and the title of the other was "Where there's a Will there's a Way; or, An Ascent of Mont Blanc without Guides," by Messrs. Hudson and Kennedy. These two books revealed to their readers the existence of a new sport, whose devotees exhibited an enthusiasm unaccountable to ordinary mortals. Some hints had already been given by Professor Forbes, whose travels in the Pennine Alps had appeared as early as 1843; but although the true mountaineering spirit is very evident in his descriptions, it was overlaid by scientific disquisitions from which the mountaineering enthusiasm only crops out at intervals. Mr. Wills, however, and still more unmistakably Mr. Hudson and Mr. Kennedy, were open preachers of the new creed. Mr. Wills, whilst giving many admirable descriptions of adventure, might perhaps leave it to be imagined by the careless reader that a love of scenery and a love of science were the principal motives which would justify mountaineering, and that no one ought to climb without a sketch-book or a barometer. His rivals put the matter in a clearer light by their book, and still more by the adventures that it recorded. They had shown that the ambition of getting up hills, the excitement of encountering danger in the Alps, and the interest of skilfully surmounting difficulties, were a sufficient inducement in themselves. Incidentally, perhaps, they might open a path for scientific observers; more certainly they themselves enjoyed, and taught others to enjoy, the scenery of the remote mountain labyrinths; but they also made it distinctly understood,—for the first time quite distinctly understood,—that mountaineering, whatever its other merits, was a sport to be put beside rowing, cricket, and the other time-honoured sports of Englishmen. Both of the gentlemen named were well-known

oarsmen on the Cam, and they carried the energetic spirit cultivated in boat-racing into a different kind of athletic exercise. Whilst they were the esoteric prophets of the new creed, whose followers had not yet organised themselves into a distinct sect, Albert Smith was preaching to the populace. The more energetic devotees looked with a certain contempt upon a man who could not but confess that he had been dragged to the summit in a semi-conscious condition, and who professed his intention of never repeating his rash experiment. The impartial historian must admit that the singular success of his lectures did much to attract popular notice to a pursuit in which he was certainly not a practical performer.

Meanwhile the small band of true zealots had done much towards lowering the terrors of the high summits. They had thoroughly humbled the highest mountain in the Alps. It was their professed intention to break down the old Chamouni system. They endeavoured to prove that the elaborate apparatus of guides and porters was unnecessary, and that Mont Blanc was by no means deserving of the respectful awe with which he had hitherto been treated. To compare small things with great, they did in mountaineering what Xenophon did in the Retreat of the Ten Thousand. He conclusively proved the weakness of the great Eastern monarchy, and prepared the way for his mighty successor, who was to look round and sigh for more worlds to conquer. Just so Messrs. Hudson and Kennedy proved that the mountain power was not what it had been thought to be; but the days were not yet come when the mountaineer should pause for want of a field for victory. These gentlemen and their party had gained their object, but only after long trouble and preparation. They had failed more than once; they had trained themselves by careful experience, and were perhaps as good a set of amateurs as ever attempted an ascent; yet they spent an amount of trouble in climbing one peak which would be sufficient, at the present day, to conquer half the mountains in Switzerland. In one respect, we cannot but remark, they set an example which has not often been followed. They made themselves independent of guides, and gave a much greater proof of skill than many men who have made far more difficult ascents by blindly following experienced natives. An amateur is never equal to a man who has passed his whole life in the mountains; but it would be well if more amateurs qualified themselves, without rashness, to rely upon their own powers in difficult places. On this, however, we shall presently have more to say.

And now new disciples began to gather round the first teachers of the creed. The whole Alps lay before them. In every district there were many summits defying all assault. The guide-books were sown thickly with descriptions of inaccessible peaks. Even in the Oberland, the most hackneyed of all districts, few of the loftier summits had been reached. The chain from the St. Bernard to the Simplon

had scarcely been touched; and such regions as Dauphiné and the Engadine were all but unknown to the tourist genus. There seemed to be an inexhaustible field for enterprise. The zealots of whom we have spoken soon formed themselves into a distinct body; the Alpine Club was founded in 1857, and in 1867 the Alps had been exhausted. The word "inaccessible" had, with certain insignificant exceptions, been deprived of meaning. The first harvest gathered was described to the world in the volume called "Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers," published in 1859. The general public first became alive to the importance of the rising sect by the popularity of this volume. It made a decided hit; it was treated with good-humoured ridicule in the Times; and the Alpine Club speedily became a byword for a set of harmless lunatics. Like many other sects, they throve upon chaff, and increased and flourished mightily. The volumes which they have since published, five in all, have indeed failed of the success which attended the first; but they contain an account of the complete conquest and annexation of the whole Alpine district. We cannot recommend their perusal to any one who does not take a special interest in the subject, for it must be admitted that next to accounts of horse-racing and cricket-matches, accounts of Alpine ascents are perhaps the dreariest variety of current literature. At first they had a certain interest even for persons who did not mean to risk their necks; but it is as difficult to secure much variety in narratives of this kind as for a young curate to preach a dozen different sermons on the same text. Certain catchwords about arêtes and snow-slopes and bergschrunds, and staple jokes about eating and drinking and smoking recur, till the average stomach is apt to be turned. The general result, however, of the narratives in question may, for our purpose, be easily indicated.

Mont Blanc, as we have seen, had been thoroughly put down. The monarch could no longer boast that he was inaccessible even to unaided amateurs. Little remained to do to complete his subjection, except to go up the wrong way, as people had already been up the right. This duty was conscientiously discharged, but without attracting much attention. It has become as much a matter of course in fine weather to order guides for Mont Blanc as to take a cab for the city; and it is not clear that with ordinary prudence the ascent is much more dangerous than a pedestrian excursion across certain London thoroughfares. We must take another mountain to serve as a measure of the progress of mountaineering. The terrors of the Matterhorn had now become celebrated. The boldest mountaineers looked at its tremendous cliffs with awe, and felt that there at any rate was a task which would prove beyond their powers. It was the one fortress which promised to hold out after every less appalling summit had been reached. The wild range which extends from the Matterhorn to the Weisshorn had the reputation of being the toughest part of the Alps. The Weisshorn and the Dent Blanche,—two of the

noblest peaks in Switzerland,—were climbed by Professor Tyndall and Mr. T. S. Kennedy, but the Matterhorn still seemed so terrible that the boldest guides shrank from the assault. Every one knows the view of that astonishing obelisk as it appears from Zermatt or the Riffel. The extraordinary boldness of the outline produces a perfectly startling effect. One would say that the architecture was too daring for stability. Indeed, we have frequently heard it questioned whether it is not too daring for beauty. The audacity is carried to a point at which there is a suspicion of the grotesque. Some people are half inclined to class the Matterhorn amidst freaks of nature, to compare it with the rocking-stones, or the natural bridges at which ordinary tourists stare, rather than to put it beside such superbly graceful peaks as the Weisshorn or the Jungfrau. We do not agree with this rather hypercritical observation, for the Matterhorn impresses us as perhaps the most sublime object in the Alps; but it is undeniable that its pyramidical mass is carved into such amazing forms as to produce a perfectly unique effect.

Now, the point most to be remarked here is this,—that the effect described is principally due to certain delusions of perspective. It is true, of course, that the Matterhorn is flanked by some of the most terrific of Alpine cliffs. The face, however, which to an inexperienced eye seems almost vertical, is not really steep nor difficult of access. What is more singular is, that even an experienced eye is generally deceived by these appalling slopes. Mr. Ruskin has taken the Matterhorn as a text for expounding, amongst other things, the delusive influence of certain laws of perspective, and has, as it would seem, fallen into some rather curious mistakes himself; but he does not mention, so far as we are aware, the particular fact that the Hörnli aréte, as it is called,—that which faces the spectator from Zermatt,—is really, tremendous as it appears, of moderate inclination. It was, indeed, generally thought by the guides that it would be possible to reach a considerable height by following this ridge. One of the most eminent of Swiss guides once stood with us at its foot, and we almost agreed to attempt the ascent of the mountain by following it. Unluckily,—or, it may be, luckily,—we resolved to inspect it from a different point of view, and we found the change of position more effectual than a similar change was found in Balaam's case. The mountain re-asserted its magical prestige, and the cliffs again looked so tremendous that we finally abandoned our intention. Yet the first successful attempt was made along this ridge; and up to a lofty point, where it was necessary to cross a different face of the mountain, it was made without any risk or difficulty.

The Matterhorn thus frightened off all assailants for years simply by putting on a resolute face. It looked so fierce that the boldest refused the attack. All the early attempts were made from the other side, and for a long time the same cause served to protect it even

there, although at first sight there was more promise of success. For several years bold mountaineers with good guides made resolute attempts, and came back convinced that success, if not impossible, was at least highly improbable. Professor Tyndall,—one of the best amateur climbers as well as the leading scientific authority in the Alps,—reached by far the greatest height. With him was Bennen, one of the boldest of guides. They both looked at the final cliff, and declared it to be impracticable, though an Italian guide who was with them appears to have thought otherwise. At any rate, when Mr. Whymper came the next year to try a final assault upon the great peak, this Italian guide had engaged himself to one of his countrymen to make the attempt by Professor Tyndall's route. Mr. Whymper returned straight to Zermatt, attacked the mountain by the terrible Hörnli ridge, found his way to the top without serious difficulty, and was just in time to look down upon the Italians who were at the foot of the last climb. Since that time two routes have been found for surmounting this dreaded cliff on the Italian side. The ascent has been made three times this summer, and on one occasion a girl not twenty years old reached the point from which Professor Tyndall turned back in despair. Truly, the terrors of the Matterhorn have vanished,—at least on the southern side,—and with them the Alps may be said to have finally lost,—with one exception,—their imaginative prestige.

The terrible accident which occurred on the descent of Messrs. Hudson and Whymper's party has indeed added fresh terrors to the route by the Hörnli arête, and it will, perhaps, be long before that route is again taken; but it is more than doubtful whether, if it had not been for the accident, this would not have become a favourite ascent, and one which might, under ordinary circumstances, have been taken with safety. The impression is now so great that guides will not face the one dangerous passage, and they allege plenty of reasons to justify their caution. The rocks, they say, are rotten and full of ice, and in the afternoon would always give dangerous footing. The year 1865 was unusually favourable, because the mountain was almost bare of snow, and the accident was due to a different cause on that occasion; but in most years the passage would always, they say, be one of more than ordinary risk. We venture to doubt, in the face of this, whether the reasons have not been invented to justify the unwillingness to pass an ill-omened spot. This place, almost alone amongst the Alps, is, as it were, marked with a black stone, and defended by a superstitious feeling, which has expired in other places daily traversed, though of equal intrinsic danger; and if two or three successful ascents were made it would probably vanish here also, and the ascent of the Matterhorn from Zermatt become a regular and acknowledged part of the mountaineer's programme. Nevertheless,—in spite of our own reasoning,—we do not advise any one to encounter perils which

are not the less real because they act chiefly upon the imagination of the guides. At best, the Matterhorn should not be assailed by men who cannot place full reliance upon the nerves of all their companions.

The expression of this opinion makes it necessary to say one word more, for it seems to imply a belief that the accident was caused by a want of the precautions which might have rendered it impossible. If the passage in question is not more dangerous than others daily traversed, some one must be to blame for the occurrence of the accident. It is painful to say a word which may be interpreted as condemning brave men who are now dead; and there were not in the Alps a braver and better qualified guide and amateur than Croz and Hudson. They were the strongest and most experienced men in their party, and no two mountaineers could be named superior, if equal, to them. Yet we must add that the cause of the accident seems to us to be perfectly plain, and one which ought to be understood. It was simply that there was an inexperienced and untried man in the party, without,—and this is the important point,—a due force of guides. We do not say who was to blame; but if it was right to take a novice in the art up a mountain supposed to be the most dangerous in the Alps, it was certainly not right to take him with only three guides amongst four gentlemen. If, as is a moderate rule, there had been a guide between every two gentlemen, the accident could hardly have occurred. But we do not wish to insist upon a very painful subject.

The conquest of the Matterhorn substantially concluded one era in mountain-climbing, and it suggests several reflections as to the future of the art. One great inducement for climbing has all but disappeared. No one will again know the pleasure of being the first to plant his foot upon a hitherto untouched summit. The mountaineers may labour to make frivolous distinctions, to claim credit for small variations upon established routes, and to describe how for the first time they have walked up the right side of a glacier instead of the left. But the process is a depressing one, and cannot last long. It is like the effort of a company of shipwrecked men to find a few crumbs strewn about the scene of their former meals. But even this resource will soon be exhausted, and then the pleasure of discovery in the Alps will be reckoned amongst extinct amusements. It is a mere foretaste of what is coming to the world at large. We have the misfortune of being confined to a limited planet, and must take the consequences of our position. When there is a railroad to Timbuctoo, and another through the central regions of Asia, our great-great-grandchildren will feel on a large scale the same regret for the old days, when the earth contained an apparently inexhaustible expanse of unknown regions, that the Alpine traveller now feels on a very diminutive scale. But when the bloom of romance has departed, travelling will not cease. It will perhaps be more interesting to an

intelligent mind, though the glories of Columbus or of Livingstone will be no longer amongst the possible objects of ambition. It is not quite so clear that this will be the case with mountaineering, or that men will feel the same interest in ascents when they can no longer hope to rival the glories of Saussure, of Forbes, or of the modern race of the Alpine Club.

There has, indeed, been a common cry, which was especially strengthened by the accident on the Matterhorn and two or three catastrophes which occurred about the same time, that under no circumstances was the game worth the candle. And we are quite prepared to admit that if we were to look forward to a yearly repetition of such misfortunes, it would be difficult to defend the practice of climbing, delightful as it may be in the opinion of its true devotees. We believe, however, that the facts show that the danger is by no means such as has sometimes been asserted, and that mountaineering, if pursued in a reasonable spirit, will be found to be not merely a healthy and delightful, but also a very safe, amusement. Thus, we may remark that for a long period previous to the Matterhorn catastrophe, serious accidents had been exceedingly rare. Dr. Hamel's party had come to harm on Mont Blanc from a contempt of the advice of the guides, and three Englishmen had perished on the Col du Geant owing to a total absence of the usual precautions. Still numerous parties had ascended Mont Blanc and other mountains every year without a single misfortune, and, even in later and more adventurous times, experienced mountaineers who obeyed the rules of prudence have enjoyed almost unbroken security. The Alpine Club now numbers over 300 members, and has from the beginning included nearly all the most enthusiastic climbers. Yet, with the exception of the Matterhorn catastrophe, no serious accident has ever happened to one of its members. One or two gentlemen have managed to tumble over their own axes, and a distinguished member, in the ardour of science, succeeded in getting under a falling block of ice, and being considerably damaged for the time; but with these exceptions we believe that the club has remained entirely free from misfortune. There have been almost as many lives of tourists sacrificed on Snowdon as on Mont Blanc since Dr. Hamel's accident, though it must be admitted that the number of ascents of Snowdon has been considerably larger. The explanation seems to be simple. The Alps, as we have said, repelled travellers chiefly by imaginary dangers; they looked so steep, so big, and so slippery, that people feared to attack them,—to say nothing of the fanciful horrors of the "reverberation of the sun's rays" and the rarefaction of the atmosphere to which the earliest race of climbers were subject. As it gradually became apparent that these dangers had been over-estimated, there was a natural tendency to regard all mountain difficulties with contempt. Both travellers and guides, in many instances, lost sight

of the plainest principles of prudence, and were taught by sad experience that there were some very real dangers in the Alps, though those are not always the greatest which are the most conspicuous. In this way, the advice most required by mountaineers is opposite to that which should have been given to their predecessors. They need not be told that many of the apparent dangers are illusory, but should rather be reminded that there are other very serious ones whose presence sometimes is only perceptible to an experienced eye, and that the observance of certain precautions is necessary to justify them in pursuing their favourite sport.

We may hope that the terrible lesson of the Matterhorn has, for some time at least, impressed this necessity upon the minds of most mountaineers, and upon their recognition of it depends both their safety and their pleasure. The first, and one of the most essential, rules applies to the position of the guides. Mountaineering differs from most sports in this, that the difference between the professional and the amateur is unusually great. The players generally beat the gentlemen at cricket, and no amateur oarsman has much chance with a really good waterman; but a contest of gentlemen against guides on the Alps would be far more hopeless than a similar match in either of these games. The great reason is, of course, that most men take to the mountains comparatively late in life. Grown-up men of average powers of walking are perfectly capable of undertaking almost any ascent. There will be a very great difference, indeed, between the pace and the ease with which different men can do their work; a light, active walker will beat a heavy, short-legged rival by many hours in the ascent of a first-rate mountain. Still, with good weather and favourable snow, there is no peak in the Alps beyond the reach of a good average walker, and a man who can do his thirty miles a day on level ground may confidently undertake the most difficult feats that have been hitherto accomplished, unless he has a special antipathy to uphill progression. So far, then, although guides are as a rule very superior to amateurs, particularly when weight has to be carried, the superiority, though decisive, is not absolutely crushing. Some very good walkers will even equal,—though they cannot surpass,—a really good guide at a steady, uneventful climb. But that in which guides have an unapproachable advantage is a kind of instinct, difficult to describe, which is only given by life-long experience. It is not so much in performing gymnastic feats, though an accomplished chamois-hunter will often succeed in exploits at which the most active Englishman can only stare in astonishment. He will walk and leap upon slippery edges of ice and bare surfaces of steep rock as though he were possessed of a mysterious amulet, —the only magic being that of long practice. There are, however, very few places in which this cat-like power of keeping a footing under difficulties is really essential. It looks brilliant, and

often saves time; but a little patience will generally find a way of circumventing difficulties which cannot be directly encountered. In short, it is a far more important element of success to have a tolerable amount of endurance than to be unusually active; the power of performing feats is scarcely ever indispensable, whereas a capacity for good steady plodding is generally all that is required for the ascent and that is necessary to enjoyment. It is when we come to a higher branch of the art, to a thorough knowledge of mountain craft, that guides show that superiority in skill which makes their aid in many cases indispensable. A good guide, who has probably been trained as a chamois-hunter, who has at least been familiar from his earliest youth with the mysteries of the climbing art, acquires a skill which we can only compare to that which savage tribes display in following a track by the eye. Suppose, for example, that a party with one of the first-rate guides is moving to the ascent of a new mountain. It is often thought, by those who have not tried, that in this case guides and amateurs will be about on a par. Nothing can be further from the truth. There is, perhaps, a difficult glacier to be crossed, and beyond it a long wall of rocks, mixed with ice, to be climbed. The guide will, in the first place, select the most practicable route for climbing the rocks; he may not be able to say whether it will prove practicable or not, for that depends upon minute peculiarities about the rocks and the ice which only reveal themselves on close inspection. But if the amateurs and the guides differ as to the best route of assault, the chances are at least twenty to one in favour of the guide's opinion. The next thing is to lay down the best line for approaching the rocks through the tangled labyrinth of crevasses. Here a good guide will at a glance determine the line to be taken, and will follow it unerringly without a single mistake, whereas a traveller has an equal chance of selecting the worst route, and when he is in the midst of the distorted masses of ice, will probably find that he has lost his clue. On arriving at the rocks, the guide, again, will be able to give a thoroughly trustworthy opinion as to the state of the snow; he will know exactly what is the danger of avalanches or falls of stones, and will adopt the best means for avoiding such dangers. In the actual climb the travellers constantly lose their place, as it were; that is, they confuse the different pinnacles of rock, and fancy that they are at one point which they have marked from below, when they are really a long way off from it. The guide never commits such a blunder, which may frequently cause the failure of an expedition. To mention only one other point out of many; a guide has the most perfect confidence in retracing the exact route by which the ascent has been made, although on the return every feature of the mountain is seen from the reverse side, and has, as every traveller knows, an entirely changed aspect. In a wilderness of blocks of stone, each as like to another as sheep in a flock, he shows a facility like that

of the shepherd with his sheep in recognising each separate block at which he has cast a hasty glance in the morning. There is no part of a mountaineer's craft so difficult to acquire as this; and for want of it travellers are constantly bewildered and hopelessly at a loss, where their guides never hesitate for an instant. Even in a fog or a dark night a guide will find his way by what seems an unaccountable instinct, simply because his mind has become accustomed to mark and retain the most trifling details, which make no individual impression upon an inexperienced mind.

In all these, and in many other respects, a guide has the unapproachable advantage conferred by habits which have become instincts, and it is a real pleasure, when the traveller has become qualified to judge of the skill displayed, to watch a thoroughly good mountaineer finding his way through the various difficulties that obstruct every new ascent. The most obvious moral is that a difficult ascent should never be attempted by a novice without a sufficient force of guides. It will often be of no avail to have even the ablest and most experienced amateur as a substitute; for, in addition to the points of superiority already mentioned, the guide has the professional instinct strongly developed;—that is, he is always ready to give assistance at the very instant it is required; and assistance, to be of any value, should generally be given without the delay even of a fraction of a second. A fall which may easily be arrested at the first moment becomes irresistible at the end of one or two seconds. The amateur forgets to move till the accident has actually begun. A good guide will see the first incipient symptoms of unsteadiness. In the next place, when good guides are taken, it should be a point of honour to listen to their advice. As a rule, such a guide errs on the side of audacity; he takes a natural interest in the success of the expedition; and he is accustomed, in chamois-hunting, to venture into far more dangerous positions than any which travellers will probably encounter. It is far better to give up any ascent whatever than to urge a man in whom you have confidence to go on where his judgment is against going, and if you have not confidence in your man, it is best to come back and get another guide. It is sometimes made an accusation against Alpine climbers that they tempt poor peasants into positions of peril by the offer of a few francs,—to which several answers may be made; as that, if the risk is as small as most travellers believe, the temptation is not unjustifiable; further, that the travellers themselves undoubtedly run a greater risk than their more active companions: moreover, that the guides are perfectly well able to judge for themselves, and exact a sufficient payment for the risk incurred. These answers are quite satisfactory, but only on the assumption that a guide is never unfairly pressed to proceed at critical moments; for then the danger would certainly be increased to an excessive degree, and an unfair advantage would be taken of a man's natural desire to dis-

tinguish himself. In short, it should be laid down as part of the elementary code of a mountaineer's duty, that certain prudential rules should be strictly observed, and that the worst of all breaches of prudence is a determination to proceed in defiance of the opinion of an expert.

There is, however, another corollary to this doctrine, upon which it is perhaps more important to insist at the present moment. We have endeavoured to show that guides have an incontestable superiority over amateurs, and that the most lamentable accident that has hitherto happened was caused by the want of a due force of guides. We may add that it is our profound conviction that an attempt to dispense with their services on a large scale would lead to an immense increase of accidents. Nevertheless, there is another side to the question. It has been too much the fashion of late years for men to trust everything to their guides. Gentlemen come out to Switzerland, and before they know what a crevasse means, they undertake the most difficult expeditions in reliance upon the skill of others. This is fair neither to the guides nor to themselves. It is unfair to the guides, because it is an enormous tax upon their strength. A gentleman was not long ago roped to a guide to cross a glacier, and soon made it manifest that he looked upon the rope as intended for towing purposes. He considered, that is, that the guide was to drag him bodily through several miles of deep snow. He soon learnt better, and showed himself to be a good walker. But his example may be taken as an illustration. Inexperienced travellers become dead weights, though generally after a less literal fashion, and throw the whole responsibility upon their guides, without being able to assist, or even to follow by their own unaided energies. They thus impose a tax upon their guide which is in every respect unjustifiable. Such a traveller is equally unfair to himself. Many cases occur in which it is of importance that each member of a party should be able to answer for his own safety, though he need neither find the way nor give any assistance to his neighbours. On a steep snow slope, for example, a man should have perfect confidence that his own legs are to be relied upon; he should be quite confident that he will not make a slip which, at a critical moment, may endanger a whole party even of able mountaineers, and without that confidence no one should undertake difficult expeditions. Moreover, an inexperienced man misses three-fourths of the pleasure. He has the misery of being lugged over every obstacle, and feeling that he is a useless clog upon his companions, and he entirely fails to appreciate the skill displayed, and to take an intelligent interest in the ascent. He is like a man who should be strapped on the back of a horse to follow a fox-hunt,—a source of danger and annoyance to his friends, and a trouble to himself.

The true principle, then, seems to be obvious. Every aspirant to mountaineering honours should take care to qualify himself by

cautious expeditions on his own account. There is plenty of pleasure to be obtained in the lower mountains. Nothing is more delightful than an ascent of some of the lower peaks in perfect solitude, or with two or three friends. A very little experience will show a man what he can safely undertake. A few walks without guides will teach a great deal that may be entirely overlooked when another man's eyes and legs have to be implicitly trusted. There is an intense pleasure in finding one's own way, and gaining confidence in one's powers. The traveller soon learns to attend to a number of circumstances which are easily missed by those who are dependent upon others. He gains some of the instinct which is so highly developed in the professional guides, though he will never be able to rival them, and, if he undertakes more difficult expeditions according to the ordinary system with a good guide, he will be able to admire with intelligence their splendid exhibitions of activity and mountain craft, and to feel that he is not a burden upon their energies. It is true that there are certain limits to his powers, and he will be able to appreciate them the more clearly. If he finds himself qualified to undertake difficult expeditions,—such as the ascent of Mont Blanc or the Finster-Aarhorn,—he must be content to make more elaborate preparations than he would need with professional assistance,—to wait for perfect weather, to retreat under a smaller stress of difficulty, and to be content with more frequent failures. He must be specially careful to secure a safe retreat, and must not venture upon unusual feats and tours de force. But he will be able to judge for himself, and to call in assistance when needed. The really difficult excursions,—for example, the ascents of the Weisshorn or the Matterhorn, or expeditions which require unusual skill upon glaciers, great labour in cutting steps, and familiarity with the state of the snow,—will probably remain forbidden to him without such assistance. When he undertakes them they will be all the pleasanter from the knowledge which he has acquired in his own adventures.

We have insisted the more upon this consideration because it seems to be the great want of this, the last era of mountaineering. The adventitious charm of absolute novelty has gone for ever. But every mountain is new to a man who attacks it for himself, who arranges his own scheme of assault, and carries it out by his own efforts. Amongst the less dangerous mountains there is plenty of room for this, which will always be a charming form of exercise. For,—and this is the last remark we need offer,—there is a pleasure about mountaineering such as few amusements can afford. Those who go with some supplementary object, to collect flowers or to make observations in geology or in glaciers, will find that their favourite pursuit gains additional charms when it leads amongst the magnificent scenery of the Alps. Whatever nonsense has been talked upon the subject, there is nothing grander in nature than the wild scenery of the high snow

tains, with its strange contrasts and rapidly shifting effects. A man who has passed a few hours even at the Jardin or at the foot of the Matterhorn has learnt what is really meant by natural sublimity. If he has a touch of poetry in his composition, he cannot but be profoundly affected by the strange solitudes of the eternal snow, by the mighty cliffs, and the soaring peaks changing their aspect with every passing cloud that drifts through them and every ray of sunshine that strikes upon them. When wandering amongst their inmost recesses, he bears away indelible impressions such as are hidden from the traveller confined to the valley, and tormented by cockneys and inn-keepers. And, if it is necessary to descend to lower considerations, there is nothing which in moderation has a more potent influence upon the health. To breathe the pure air of the Alps after eleven months in London streets is an escape from a close prison; the lungs expand, the step becomes firm, and the appetite sometimes startles even its owner. Amongst all pleasant memories of such delights, let us try to revive one which many of our readers may have enjoyed. Let us place ourselves in imagination on a sunny steep of the mountains about 4 p.m. on a glorious day in July. Behind our backs towers some mighty pyramid, which, after long calculations and various attempts, we have succeeded in scaling that morning. A cairn, just visible through a telescope from the valley, testifies to all posterity that the summit has at last felt the foot of man. We have descended through various difficulties till at last we have been greeted by the sound of the cow-bells floating up through the thin air. And now we have reached the châlet, emptied a pailful of delicious warm milk at a draught, eaten some gigantic hunks of bread, butter, honey, hard-boiled eggs, and cold fowl, and, after lighting a pipe, lain down on a bush of Alpine roses, to enjoy the pleasure of lazily regarding the glorious scenery and a little village,—not unprovided with a comfortable inn,—at our feet. Such moments leave vivid recollections, and cause those who have once tasted them to vow that they shall not be without successors. We hope that by encouraging the proper mixture of prudence and courage, of self-reliance and due respect to better experience than their own, the members of the Alpine Club may long continue to enjoy one of the purest and most stimulating of athletic pleasures, and encourage new generations to follow their footsteps, though they can no longer hold out a hope of new conquests.

PHINEAS FINN, THE IRISH MEMBER.

CHAPTER XII.

AUTUMNAL PROSPECTS.

THE session went on very calmly after the opening battle which ousted Lord De Terrier and sent Mr. Mildmay back to the Treasury,—so calmly that Phineas Finn was unconsciously disappointed, as lacking that excitement of contest to which he had been introduced in the first days of his parliamentary career. From time to time certain waspish attacks were made by Mr. Daubeny, now on this Secretary of State and now on that; but they were felt by both parties to mean nothing; and as no great measure was brought forward, nothing which would serve by the magnitude of its interests to divide the liberal side of the House into fractions, Mr. Mildmay's Cabinet was allowed to hold its own in comparative peace and quiet. It was now July,—the middle of July,—and the member for Loughshane had not yet addressed the House. How often he had meditated doing so; how he had composed his speeches walking round the Park on his way down to the House; how he got his subjects up,—only to find on hearing them discussed that he really knew little or nothing about them; how he had his arguments and almost his very words taken out of his mouth by some other member; and lastly, how he had actually been deterred from getting upon his legs by a certain tremour of blood round his heart when the moment for rising had come,—of all this he never said a word to any man. Since that last journey to county Mayo, Laurence Fitzgibbon had been his most intimate friend, but he said nothing of all this even to Laurence Fitzgibbon. To his other friend, Lady Laura Standish, he did explain something of his feelings, not absolutely describing to her the extent of hindrance to which his modesty had subjected him, but letting her know that he had his qualms as well as his aspirations. But as Lady Laura always recommended patience, and more than once expressed her opinion that a young member would be better to sit in silence at least for one session, he was not driven to the mortification of feeling that he was incurring her contempt by his bashfulness. As regarded the men among whom he lived, I think he was almost annoyed at finding that no one seemed to expect that he should speak. Barrington Erle, when he had first talked of sending Phineas down to Loughshane, had predicted for him all manner of parliamentary successes, and had expressed the warmest admiration of the manner in which Phineas

"I wish to regard you as a dear friend,—both of my own and of my husband."

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had discussed this or that subject at the Union. "We have not above one or two men in the House who can do that kind of thing," Barrington Erle had once said. But now no allusions whatever were made to his powers of speech, and Phineas in his modest moments began to be more amazed than ever that he should find himself seated in that chamber.

To the forms and technicalities of parliamentary business he did give close attention, and was unremitting in his attendance. On one or two occasions he ventured to ask a question of the Speaker, and as the words of experience fell into his ears, he would tell himself that he was going through his education,—that he was learning to be a working member, and perhaps to be a statesman. But his regrets with reference to Mr. Low and the dingy chambers in Old Square were very frequent; and had it been possible for him to undo all that he had done, he would often have abandoned to some one else the honour of representing the electors of Loughshane.

But he was supported in all his difficulties by the kindness of his friend, Lady Laura Standish. He was often in the House in Portman Square, and was always received with cordiality,—and, as he thought, almost with affection. She would sit and talk to him, sometimes saying a word about her brother and sometimes about her father, as though there were more between them than the casual intimacy of London acquaintance. And in Portman Square he had been introduced to Miss Effingham, and had found Miss Effingham to be—very nice. Miss Effingham had quite taken to him, and he had danced with her at two or three parties, talking always, as he did so, about Lady Laura Standish.

"I declare, Laura, I think your friend Mr. Finn is in love with you," Violet said to Lady Laura one night.

"I don't think that. He is fond of me, and so am I of him. He is so honest, and so naïve without being awkward! And then he is undoubtedly clever."

"And so uncommonly handsome," said Violet.

"I don't know that that makes much difference," said Lady Laura.

"I think it does if a man looks like a gentleman as well."

"Mr. Finn certainly looks like a gentleman," said Lady Laura.

"And no doubt is one," said Violet. "I wonder whether he has got any money."

"Not a penny, I should say."

"How does such a man manage to live? There are so many men like that, and they are always mysteries to me. I suppose he'll have to marry an heiress."

"Whoever gets him will not have a bad husband," said Lady Laura Standish.

Phineas during the summer had very often met Mr. Kennedy. They sat on the same side of the House, they belonged to the same club,

they dined together more than once in Portman Square, and on one occasion Phineas had accepted an invitation to dinner sent to him by Mr. Kennedy himself. "A slower affair I never saw in my life," he said afterwards to Laurence Fitzgibbon. "Though there were two or three men there who talk everywhere else, they could not talk at his table." "He gave you good wine, I should say," said Fitzgibbon, "and let me tell you that that covers a multitude of sins." In spite, however, of all these opportunities for intimacy, now, nearly at the end of the session, Phineas had hardly spoken a dozen words to Mr. Kennedy, and really knew nothing whatsoever of the man, as one friend,—or even as one acquaintance knows another. Lady Laura had desired him to be on good terms with Mr. Kennedy, and for that reason he had dined with him. Nevertheless he disliked Mr. Kennedy, and felt quite sure that Mr. Kennedy disliked him. He was therefore rather surprised when he received the following note :—

"Albany, Z 3, July 17, 186—.

"My dear Mr. Finn,

"I shall have some friends at Loughlinter next month, and should be very glad if you will join us. I will name the 16th August. I don't know whether you shoot, but there are grouse and deer.

"Yours truly,

"Robert Kennedy."

What was he to do? He had already began to feel rather uncomfortable at the prospect of being separated from all his new friends as soon as the session should be over. Laurence Fitzgibbon had asked him to make another visit to County Mayo, but that he had declined. Lady Laura had said something to him about going abroad with her brother, and since that there had sprung up a sort of intimacy between him and Lord Chiltern; but nothing had been fixed about this foreign trip, and there were pecuniary objections to it which put it almost out of his power. The Christmas holidays he would of course pass with his family at Killaloe, but he hardly liked the idea of hurrying off to Killaloe immediately the session should be over. Everybody around him seemed to be looking forward to pleasant leisure doings in the country. Men talked about grouse, and of the ladies at the houses to which they were going and of the people whom they were to meet. Lady Laura had said nothing of her own movements for the early autumn, and no invitation had come to him to go to the Earl's country house. He had already felt that every one would depart and that he would be left,—and this had made him uncomfortable. What was he to do with the invitation from Mr. Kennedy? He disliked the man, and had told himself half a dozen times that he despised him. Of course he must refuse it. Even for the sake of the scenery

and the grouse, and the pleasant party, and the feeling that going to Loughlinter in August would be the proper sort of thing to do, he must refuse it! But it occurred to him at last that he would call in Portman Square before he wrote his note.

"Of course you will go," said Lady Laura, in her most decided tone.

"And why?"

"In the first place it is civil in him to ask you, and why should you be uncivil in return?"

"There is nothing uncivil in not accepting a man's invitation," said Phineas.

"We are going," said Lady Laura, "and I can only say that I shall be disappointed if you do not go too. Both Mr. Gresham and Mr. Monk will be there, and I believe they have never stayed together in the same house before. I have no doubt there are a dozen men on your side of the House who would give their eyes to be there. Of course you will go."

Of course he did go. The note accepting Mr. Kennedy's invitation was written at the Reform Club within a quarter of an hour of his leaving Portman Square. He was very careful in writing to be not more familiar or more civil than Mr. Kennedy had been to himself, and then he signed himself "Yours truly, Phineas Finn." But another proposition was made to him, and a most charming proposition, during the few minutes that he remained in Portman Square. "I am so glad," said Lady Laura, "because I can now ask you to run down to us at Saulsby for a couple of days on your way to Loughlinter. Till this was fixed I couldn't ask you to come all the way to Saulsby for two days; and there won't be room for more between our leaving London and starting to Loughlinter." Phineas swore that he would have gone if it had been but for one hour, and if Saulsby had been twice the distance. "Very well; come on the 13th and go on the 15th. You must go on the 15th, unless you choose to stay with the housekeeper. And remember, Mr. Finn, we have got no grouse at Saulsby." Phineas declared that he did not care a straw for grouse.

There was another little occurrence which happened before Phineas left London, and which was not altogether so charming as his prospects at Saulsby and Loughlinter. Early in August, when the session was still incomplete, he dined with Laurence Fitzgibbon at the Reform Club. Laurence had specially invited him to do so, and made very much of him on the occasion. "By George, my dear fellow," Laurence said to him that morning, "nothing has happened to me this session that has given me so much pleasure as your being in the House. Of course there are fellows with whom one is very intimate and of whom one is very fond,—and all that sort of thing. But most of these Englishmen on our side are such

cold fellows; or else they are like Ratler and Barrington Erle, thinking of nothing but politics. And then as to our own men,—there are so many of them one can hardly trust! That's the truth of it. Your being in the House has been such a comfort to me!" Phineas, who really liked his friend Laurence, expressed himself very warmly in answer to this, and become affectionate, and made sundry protestations of friendship which were perfectly sincere. Their sincerity was tested after dinner, when Fitzgibbon, as they two were seated on a sofa in the corner of the smoking-room, asked Phineas to put his name to the back of a bill for two hundred and fifty pounds at six months' date.

"But, my dear Laurence," said Phineas, "two hundred and fifty pounds is a sum of money utterly beyond my reach."

"Exactly, my dear boy, and that's why I've come to you. D'ye think I'd have asked anybody who by any impossibility might have been made to pay anything for me?"

"But what's the use of it then?"

"All the use in the world. It's for me to judge of the use, you know. Why, d'ye think I'd ask it if it wasn't of use? I'll make it of use, my boy. And take my word, you'll never hear about it again. It's just a forestalling of my salary; that's all. I wouldn't do it till I saw that we were at least safe for six months to come." Then Phineas Finn with many misgivings, with much inward hatred of himself for his own weakness, did put his name on the back of the bill which Laurence Fitzgibbon had prepared for his signature.

CHAPTER XIII.

SAULSBY WOOD.

"So you won't come to Moydrum again?" said Laurence Fitzgibbon to his friend.

"Not this autumn, Laurence. Your father would think that I want to live there."

"Bedad, it's my father would be glad to see you,—and the oftener the better."

"The fact is, my time is filled up."

"You're not going to be one of the party at Loughlinter?"

"I believe I am. Kennedy asked me, and people seem to think that everybody is to do what he bids them."

"I should think so too. I wish he had asked me. I should have thought it as good as a promise of an under-secretaryship. All the Cabinet are to be there. I don't suppose he ever had an Irishman in his house before. When do you start?"

"Well;—on the 12th or 13th. I believe I shall go to Saulsby on my way."

"The devil you will. Upon my word, Phineas, my boy, you're the luckiest fellow I know. This is your first year, and you're asked to the two most difficult houses in England. You have only to look out for an heiress now. There is little Vi Effingham;—she is sure to be at Saulsby. Good-bye, old fellow. Don't you be in the least unhappy about the bill. I'll see to making that all right."

Phineas was rather unhappy about the bill; but there was so much that was pleasant in his cup at the present moment, that he resolved, as far as possible, to ignore the bitter of that one ingredient. He was a little in the dark as to two or three matters respecting these coming visits. He would have liked to have taken a servant with him; but he had no servant, and felt ashamed to hire one for the occasion. And then he was in trouble about a gun, and the paraphernalia of shooting. He was not a bad shot at snipe in the bogs of county Clare, but he had never even seen a gun used in England. However, he bought himself a gun,—with other paraphernalia, and took a license for himself, and then groaned over the expense to which he found that his journey would subject him. And at last he hired a servant for the occasion. He was intensely ashamed of himself when he had done so, hating himself, and telling himself that he was going to the devil headlong. And why had he done it? Not that Lady Laura would like him the better, or that she would care whether he had a servant or not. She probably would know nothing of his servant. But the people about her would know, and he was foolishly anxious that the people about her should think that he was worthy of her.

Then he called on Mr. Low before he started. "I did not like to leave London without seeing you," he said; "but I know you will have nothing pleasant to say to me."

"I shall say nothing unpleasant certainly. I see your name in the divisions, and I feel a sort of envy myself."

"Any fool could go into a lobby," said Phineas.

"To tell you the truth, I have been gratified to see that you have had the patience to abstain from speaking till you had looked about you. It was more than I expected from your hot Irish blood. Going to meet Mr. Gresham and Mr. Monk,—are you? Well, I hope you may meet them in the Cabinet some day. Mind you come and see me when Parliament meets in February."

Mrs. Bunce was delighted when she found that Phineas had hired a servant; but Mr. Bunce predicted nothing but evil from so vain an expense. "Don't tell me; where is it to come from? He ain't no richer because he's in Parliament. There ain't no wages. M.P. and M.T.,"—whereby Mr. Bunce, I fear, meant empty,—"are pretty much alike when a man hasn't a fortune at his back." "But he's going to stay with all the lords in the Cabinet," said Mrs. Bunce, to whom Phineas, in his pride, had confided perhaps more than was necessary. "Cabinet, indeed," said Bunce; "if he'd stick to cham-

bers, and let alone cabinets, he'd do a deal better. Given up his rooms, has he,—till February? He don't expect we're going to keep them empty for him!"

Phineas found that the house was full at Saulsby, although the sojourn of the visitors would necessarily be so short. There were three or four there on their way on to Loughlinter, like himself,—Mr. Bonteen and Mr. Ratler, with Mr. Palliser, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and his wife,—and there was Violet Effingham, who, however, was not going to Loughlinter. "No, indeed," she said to our hero, who on the first evening had the pleasure of taking her in to dinner, "unfortunately I haven't a seat in Parliament, and therefore I am not asked."

"Lady Laura is going."

"Yes;—but Lady Laura has a Cabinet Minister in her keeping. I've only one comfort;—you'll be awfully dull."

"I daresay it would be very much nicer to stay here," said Phineas.

"If you want to know my real mind," said Violet, "I would give one of my little fingers to go. There will be four Cabinet Ministers in the house, and four un-Cabinet Ministers, and half a dozen other members of Parliament, and there will be Lady Glencora Palliser, who is the best fun in the world; and, in point of fact, it's the thing of the year. But I am not asked. You see I belong to the Baldock faction, and we don't sit on your side of the House. Mr. Kennedy thinks that I should tell secrets."

Why on earth had Mr. Kennedy invited him, Phineas Finn, to meet four Cabinet Ministers and Lady Glencora Palliser? He could only have done so at the instance of Lady Laura Standish. It was delightful for Phineas to think that Lady Laura cared for him so deeply; but it was not equally delightful when he remembered how very close must be the alliance between Mr. Kennedy and Lady Laura, when she was thus powerful with him.

At Saulsby Phineas did not see much of his hostess. When they were making their plans for the one entire day of this visit, she said a soft word of apology to him. "I am so busy with all these people, that I hardly know what I am doing. But we shall be able to find a quiet minute or two at Loughlinter,—unless, indeed, you intend to be on the mountains all day. I suppose you have brought a gun like everybody else?"

"Yes;—I have brought a gun. I do shoot; but I am not an inveterate sportsman."

On that one day there was a great riding party made up, and Phineas found himself mounted, after luncheon, with some dozen other equestrians. Among them were Miss Effingham and Lady Glencora, Mr. Ratler and the Earl of Brentford himself. Lady Glencora, whose husband was, as has been said, Chancellor of the Exchequer, and who

was still a young woman, and a very pretty woman, had taken lately very strongly to politics, which she discussed among men and women of both parties with something more than ordinary audacity. "What a nice, happy, lazy time you've had of it since you've been in," said she to the Earl.

"I hope we have been more happy than lazy," said the Earl.

"But you've done nothing. Mr. Palliser has twenty schemes of reform, all mature; but among you you've not let him bring in one of them. The Duke and Mr. Mildmay and you will break his heart among you."

"Poor Mr. Palliser!"

"The truth is, if you don't take care he and Mr. Monk and Mr. Gresham will arise and shake themselves, and turn you all out."

"We must look to ourselves, Lady Glencora."

"Indeed, yes;—or you will be known to all posterity as the faineant government."

"Let me tell you, Lady Glencora, that a faineant government is not the worst government that England can have. It has been the great fault of our politicians that they have all wanted to do something."

"Mr. Mildmay is at any rate innocent of that charge," said Lady Glencora.

They were now riding through a vast wood, and Phineas found himself delightfully established by the side of Violet Effingham. "Mr. Ratler has been explaining to me that he must have nineteen next session. Now, if I were you, Mr. Finn, I would decline to be counted up in that way as one of Mr. Ratler's sheep."

"But what am I to do?"

"Do something on your own hook. You men in Parliament are so much like sheep! If one jumps at a gap, all go after him,—and then you are penned into lobbies, and then you are fed, and then you are fleeced. I wish I were in Parliament. I'd get up in the middle and make such a speech. You all seem to me to be so much afraid of one another that you don't quite dare to speak out. Do you see that cottage there?"

"What a pretty cottage it is!"

"Yes;—is it not? Twelve years ago I took off my shoes and stockings and had them dried in that cottage, and when I got back to the house I was put to bed for having been out all day in the wood."

"Were you wandering about alone."

"No, I wasn't alone. Oswald Standish was with me. We were children then. Do you know him?"

"Lord Chiltern;—yes, I know him. He and I have been rather friends this year."

"He is very good;—is he not?"

"Good,—in what way?"

"Honest and generous!"

"I know no man who I believe to be more so."

"And he is clever?" asked Miss Effingham.

"Very clever. That is, he talks very well if you will let him talk after his own fashion. You would always fancy that he was going to eat you;—but that is his way."

"And you like him?"

"Very much."

"I am so glad to hear you say so."

"Is he a favourite of yours, Miss Effingham?"

"Not now,—not particularly. I hardly ever see him. But his sister is the best friend I have, and I used to like him so much when he was a boy! I have not seen that cottage since that day, and I remember it as though it were yesterday. Lord Chiltern is quite changed, is he not?"

"Changed,—in what way?"

"They used to say that he was—unsteady you know."

"I think he is changed. But Chiltern is at heart a Bohemian. It is impossible not to see that at once. He hates the decencies of life."

"I suppose he does," said Violet. "He ought to marry. If he were married, that would all be cured;—don't you think so?"

"I cannot fancy him with a wife," said Phineas. "There is a savagery about him which would make him an uncomfortable companion for a woman."

"But he would love his wife?"

"Yes, as he does his horses. And he would treat her well,—as he does his horses. But he expects every horse he has to do anything that any horse can do; and he would expect the same of his wife."

Phineas had no idea how deep an injury he might be doing his friend by this description, nor did it once occur to him that his companion was thinking of herself as the possible wife of this Red Indian. Miss Effingham rode on in silence for some distance, and then she said but one word more about Lord Chiltern. "He was so good to me in that cottage."

On the following day the party at Saulsby was broken up, and there was a regular pilgrimage towards Loughlinter. Phineas resolved upon sleeping a night at Edinburgh on his way, and he found himself joined in the bands of close companionship with Mr. Ratler for the occasion. The evening was by no means thrown away, for he learned much of his trade from Mr. Ratler. And Mr. Ratler was heard to declare afterwards at Loughlinter that Mr. Finn was a pleasant young man.

It soon came to be admitted by all who knew Phineas Finn that he had a peculiar power of making himself agreeable which no one knew how to analyse or define. "I think it is because he listens so

well," said one man. "But the women would not like him for that," said another. "He has studied when to listen and when to talk," said a third. The truth, however, was, that Phineas Finn had made no study in the matter at all. It was simply his nature to be pleasant.

CHAPTER XIV.

LOUGHLINTER.

PHINEAS FINN reached Loughlinter together with Mr. Ratler in a post-chaise from the neighbouring town. Mr. Ratler, who had done this kind of thing very often before, travelled without impediments, but the new servant of our hero's was stuck outside with the driver, and was in the way. "I never bring a man with me," said Mr. Ratler to his young friend. "The servants of the house like it much better, because they get fee'd; you are just as well waited on, and it don't cost half as much." Phineas blushed as he heard all this; but there was the impediment, not to be got rid of for the nonce, and Phineas made the best of his attendant. "It's one of those points," said he, "as to which a man never quite makes up his mind. If you bring a fellow, you wish you hadn't brought him; and if you don't, you wish you had." "I'm a great deal more decided in my ways than that," said Mr. Ratler.

Loughlinter, as they approached it, seemed to Phineas to be a much finer place than Saulsby. And so it was, except that Loughlinter wanted that graceful beauty of age which Saulsby possessed. Loughlinter was all of cut stone, but the stones had been cut only yesterday. It stood on a gentle slope, with a greensward falling from the front entrance down to a mountain lake. And on the other side of the Lough there rose a mighty mountain to the skies, Ben Linter. At the foot of it, and all round to the left, there ran the woods of Linter, stretching for miles through crags and bogs and mountain lands. No better ground for deer than the side of Ben Linter was there in all those highlands. And the Linter, rushing down into the Lough through rocks which, in some places, almost met together above its waters, ran so near to the house that the pleasant noise of its cataracts could be heard from the hall door. Behind the house the expanse of drained park land seemed to be interminable; and then, again, came the mountains. There were Ben Linn and Ben Lody;—and the whole territory belonged to Mr. Kennedy. He was laird of Linn and laird of Linter, as his people used to say. And yet his father had walked into Glasgow as a little boy,—no doubt with the normal half-crown in his breeches' pocket.

"Magnificent;—is it not?" said Phineas to the Treasury Secretary, as they were being driven up to the door.

"Very grand;—but the young trees show the new man. A new man may buy a forest; but he can't get park trees."

Phineas, at the moment, was thinking how far all these things which he saw, the mountains stretching everywhere around him, the castle, the lake, the river, the wealth of it all, and, more than the wealth, the nobility of the beauty, might act as temptations to Lady Laura Standish. If a woman were asked to have the half of all this, would it be possible that she should prefer to take the half of his nothing? He thought it might be possible for a girl who would confess, or seem to confess, that love should be everything. But it could hardly be possible for a woman who looked at the world almost as a man looked at it,—as an oyster to be opened with such weapon as she could find ready to her hand. Lady Laura professed to have a care for all the affairs of the world. She loved politics, and could talk of social science, and had broad ideas about religion, and was devoted to certain educational views. Such a woman would feel that wealth was necessary to her, and would be willing, for the sake of wealth, to put up with a husband without romance. Nay; might it not be that she would prefer a husband without romance? Thus Phineas was arguing to himself as he was driven up to the door of Loughlinter Castle, while Mr. Ratler was eloquent on the beauty of old park trees. "After all, a Scotch forest is a very scrubby sort of thing," said Mr. Ratler.

There was nobody in the house,—at least, they found nobody; and within half an hour Phineas was walking about the grounds by himself. Mr. Ratler had declared himself to be delighted at having an opportunity of writing letters,—and no doubt was writing them by the dozen, all dated from Loughlinter, and all detailing the facts that Mr. Gresham, and Mr. Monk, and Plantagenet Palliser, and Lord Brentford were in the same house with him. Phineas had no letters to write, and therefore rushed down across the broad lawn to the river, of which he heard the noisy tumbling waters. There was something in the air which immediately filled him with high spirits; and, in his desire to investigate the glories of the place, he forgot that he was going to dine with four Cabinet Ministers in a row. He soon reached the stream, and began to make his way up it through the ravine. There was waterfall over waterfall, and there were little bridges here and there which looked to be half natural and half artificial, and a path which required that you should climb, but which was yet a path, and all was so arranged that not a pleasant splashing rush of the waters was lost to the visitor. He went on and on, up the stream, till there was a sharp turn in the ravine, and then, looking upwards, he saw above his head a man and a woman standing together on one of the little half-made wooden bridges. His eyes were sharp, and he saw at a glance that the woman was Lady Laura Standish. He had not recognised the man, but he had very little doubt that it

was Mr. Kennedy. Of course it was Mr. Kennedy, because he would prefer that it should be any other man under the sun. He would have turned back at once if he had thought that he could have done so without being observed; but he felt sure that, standing as they were, they must have observed him. He did not like to join them. He would not intrude himself. So he remained still, and began to throw stones into the river. But he had not thrown above a stone or two when he was called from above. He looked up, and then he perceived that the man who called him was his host. Of course it was Mr. Kennedy. Thereupon he ceased to throw stones, and went up the path, and joined them upon the bridge. Mr. Kennedy stepped forward, and bade him welcome to Loughlinter. His manner was less cold, and he seemed to have more words at command than was usual with him. "You have not been long," he said, "in finding out the most beautiful spot about the place."

"Is it not lovely?" said Lady Laura. "We have not been here an hour yet, and Mr. Kennedy insisted on bringing me here."

"It is wonderfully beautiful," said Phineas.

"It is this very spot where we now stand that made me build the house where it is," said Mr. Kennedy, "and I was only eighteen when I stood here and made up my mind. That is just twenty-five years ago." "So he is forty-three," said Phineas to himself, thinking how glorious it was to be only twenty-five. "And within twelve months," continued Mr. Kennedy, "the foundations were being dug and the stone-cutters were at work."

"What a good-natured man your father must have been," said Lady Laura.

"He had nothing else to do with his money but to pour it over my head, as it were. I don't think he had any other enjoyment of it himself. Will you go a little higher, Lady Laura? We shall get a fine view over to Ben Linn just now." Lady Laura declared that she would go as much higher as he chose to take her, and Phineas was rather in doubt as to what it would become him to do. He would stay where he was, or go down, or make himself to vanish after any most acceptable fashion; but if he were to do so abruptly it would seem as though he were attributing something special to the companionship of the other two. Mr. Kennedy saw his doubt, and asked him to join them. "You may as well come on, Mr. Finn. We don't dine till eight, and it is not much past six yet. The men of business are all writing letters, and the ladies who have been travelling are in bed, I believe."

"Not all of them, Mr. Kennedy," said Lady Laura. Then they went on with their walk very pleasantly, and the lord of all that they surveyed took them from one point of vantage to another, till they both swore that of all spots upon the earth Loughlinter was surely the most lovely. "I do delight in it, I own," said the lord. "When I come up here alone, and feel that in the midst of this little bit of a

crowded island I have all this to myself,—all this with which no other man's wealth can interfere,—I grow proud of my own, till I become thoroughly ashamed of myself. After all, I believe it is better to dwell in cities than in the country,—better, at any rate, for a rich man." Mr. Kennedy had now spoken more words than Phineas had heard to fall from his lips during the whole time that they had been acquainted with each other.

"I believe so too," said Laura, "if one were obliged to choose between the two. For myself, I think that a little of both is good for man and woman."

"There is no doubt about that," said Phineas.

"No doubt as far as enjoyment goes," said Mr. Kennedy.

He took them up out of the ravine on to the side of the mountain, and then down by another path through the woods to the back of the house. As they went he relapsed into his usual silence, and the conversation was kept up between the other two. At a point not very far from the castle,—just so far that one could see by the break of the ground where the castle stood, Kennedy left them. "Mr. Finn will take you back in safety, I am sure," said he, "and, as I am here, I'll go up to the farm for a moment. If I don't show myself now and again when I am here, they think I'm indifferent about the 'bestials.'"

"Now, Mr. Kennedy," said Lady Laura, "you are going to pretend to understand all about sheep and oxen." Mr. Kennedy, owning that it was so, went away to his farm, and Phineas with Lady Laura returned towards the house. "I think, upon the whole," said Lady Laura, "that that is as good a man as I know."

"I should think he is an idle one," said Phineas.

"I doubt that. He is, perhaps, neither zealous nor active. But he is thoughtful and high-principled, and has a method and a purpose in the use which he makes of his money. And you see that he has poetry in his nature too, if you get him upon the right string. How fond he is of the scenery of this place!"

"Any man would be fond of that. I'm ashamed to say that it almost makes me envy him. I certainly never have wished to be Mr. Robert Kennedy in London, but I should like to be the Laird of Loughlinter."

"'Laird of Linn and Laird of Linter,—Here in summer, gone in winter.' There is some ballad about the old lairds; but that belongs to a time when Mr. Kennedy had not been heard of, when some branch of the Mackenzies lived down at that wretched old tower which you see as you first come upon the lake. When old Mr. Kennedy bought it there were hardly a hundred acres on the property under cultivation."

"And it belonged to the Mackenzies."

"Yes;—to the Mackenzie of Linn, as he was called. It was Mr. Kennedy, the old man, who was first called Loughlinter. That is

Linn Castle, and they lived there for hundreds of years. But these Highlanders, with all that is said of their family pride, have forgotten the Mackenzies already, and are quite proud of their rich landlord."

"That is unpoetical," said Phineas.

"Yes;—but then poetry is so usually false. I doubt whether Scotland would not have been as prosaic a country as any under the sun but for Walter Scott;—and I have no doubt that Henry V. owes the romance of his character altogether to Shakspeare."

"I sometimes think you despise poetry," said Phineas.

"When it is false I do. The difficulty is to know when it is false and when it is true. Tom Moore was always false."

"Not so false as Byron," said Phineas with energy.

"Much more so, my friend. But we will not discuss that now. Have you seen Mr. Monk since you have been here?"

"I have seen no one. I came with Mr. Ratler."

"Why with Mr. Ratler? You cannot find Mr. Ratler a companion much to your taste."

"Chance brought us together. But Mr. Ratler is a man of sense, Lady Laura, and is not to be despised."

"It always seems to me," said Lady Laura, "that nothing is to be gained in politics by sitting at the feet of the little Gamaliels."

"But the great Gamaliels will not have a novice on their foot-stools."

"Then sit at no man's feet. Is it not astonishing that the price generally put upon any article by the world is that which the owner puts on it?—and that this is specially true of a man's own self? If you herd with Ratler, men will take it for granted that you are a Ratlerite, and no more. If you consort with Greshams and Pallisers, you will equally be supposed to know your own place."

"I never knew a Mentor," said Phineas, "so apt as you are to fill his Telemachus with pride."

"It is because I do not think your fault lies that way. If it did, or if I thought so, my Telemachus, you may be sure that I should resign my position as Mentor. Here are Mr. Kennedy and Lady Glencora and Mrs. Gresham on the steps." Then they went up through the Ionic columns on to the broad stone terrace before the door, and there they found a crowd of men and women. For the legislators and statesmen had written their letters, and the ladies had taken their necessary rest.

Phineas, as he was dressing, considered deeply all that Lady Laura had said to him,—not so much with reference to the advice which she had given him, though that also was of importance, as to the fact that it had been given by her. She had first called herself his Mentor; but he had accepted the name and had addressed her as her Telemachus. And yet he believed himself to be older than she,—if, indeed, there was any difference in their ages. And was it possible that a female

Mentor should love her Telemachus,—should love him as Phineas desired to be loved by Lady Laura? He would not say that it was impossible. Perhaps there had been mistakes between them;—a mistake in his manner of addressing her, and another in hers of addressing him. Perhaps the old bachelor of forty-three was not thinking of a wife. Had this old bachelor of forty-three been really in love with Lady Laura, would he have allowed her to walk home alone with Phineas, leaving her with some flimsy pretext of having to look at his sheep? Phineas resolved that he must at any rate play out his game,—whether he were to lose it or to win it; and in playing it he must, if possible, drop something of that Mentor and Telemachus style of conversation. As to the advice given him of herding with Greshams and Pallisers, instead of with Ratlers and Fitzgibbons,—he must use that as circumstances might direct. To him, himself, as he thought of it all, it was sufficiently astonishing that even the Ratlers and Fitzgibbons should admit him among them as one of themselves. "When I think of my father and of the old house at Killaloe, and remember that hitherto I have done nothing myself, I cannot understand how it is that I should be at Loughlinter." There was only one way of understanding it. If Lady Laura really loved him, the riddle might be read.

The rooms at Loughlinter were splendid, much larger and very much more richly furnished than those at Saulsby. But there was a certain stiffness in the movement of things, and perhaps in the manner of some of those present, which was not felt at Saulsby. Phineas at once missed the grace and prettiness and cheery audacity of Violet Effingham, and felt at the same time that Violet Effingham would be out of her element at Loughlinter. At Loughlinter they were met for business. It was at least a semi-political, or perhaps rather a semi-official gathering, and he became aware that he ought not to look simply for amusement. When he entered the drawing-room before dinner, Mr. Monk and Mr. Palliser, and Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Gresham, with sundry others, were standing in a wide group before the fireplace, and among them were Lady Glencora Palliser and Lady Laura and Mrs. Bonteen. As he approached them it seemed as though a sort of opening was made for himself; but he could see, though others did not, that the movement came from Lady Laura.

"I believe, Mr. Monk," said Lady Glencora, "that you and I are the only two in the whole party who really know what we would be at."

"If I must be divided from so many of my friends," said Mr. Monk, "I am happy to go astray in the company of Lady Glencora Palliser."

"And might I ask," said Mr. Gresham, with a peculiar smile for which he was famous, "what it is that you and Mr. Monk are really at."

"Making men and women all equal," said Lady Glencora. "That I take to be the gist of our political theory."

"Lady Glencora, I must cry off," said Mr. Monk.

"Yes;—no doubt. If I were in the Cabinet myself I should not admit so much. There are reticences,—of course. And there is an official discretion."

"But you don't mean to say, Lady Glencora, that you would really advocate equality?" said Mrs. Bonteen.

"I do mean to say so, Mrs. Bonteen. And I mean to go further, and to tell you that you are no Liberal at heart unless you do so likewise;—unless that is the basis of your political aspirations."

"Pray let me speak for myself, Lady Glencora."

"By no means,—not when you are criticising me and my politics. Do you not wish to make the lower orders comfortable?"

"Certainly," said Mrs. Bonteen.

"And educated, and happy, and good?"

"Undoubtedly."

"To make them as comfortable and as good as yourself?"

"Better if possible."

"And I'm sure you wish to make yourself as good and as comfortable as anybody else,—as those above you, if anybody is above you? You will admit that?"

"Yes;—if I understand you."

"Then you have admitted everything, and are an advocate for general equality,—just as Mr. Monk is, and as I am. There is no getting out of it;—is there, Mr. Kennedy?" Then dinner was announced, and Mr. Kennedy walked off with the French Republican on his arm. As she went, she whispered into Mr. Kennedy's ear, "You will understand me. I am not saying that people are equal; but that the tendency of all law-making and of all governing should be to reduce the inequalities." In answer to which Mr. Kennedy said not a word. Lady Glencora's politics were too fast and furious for his nature.

A week passed by at Loughlinter, at the end of which Phineas found himself on terms of friendly intercourse with all the political magnates assembled in the house, but especially with Mr. Monk. He had determined that he would not follow Lady Laura's advice as to his selection of companions, if in doing so he should be driven even to a seeming of intrusion. He made no attempt to sit at the feet of anybody, and would stand aloof when bigger men than himself were talking, and was content to be less,—as indeed he was less,—than Mr. Bonteen or Mr. Ratler. But at the end of a week he found that, without any effort on his part,—almost in opposition to efforts on his part,—he had fallen into an easy pleasant way with these men which was very delightful to him. He had killed a stag in company with Mr. Palliser, and had stopped beneath a crag to discuss with him a question as to

the duty on Irish malt. He had played chess with Mr. Gresham, and had been told that gentleman's opinion on the trial of Mr. Jefferson Davis. Lord Brentford had—at last—called him Finn, and had proved to him that nothing was known in Ireland about sheep. But with Mr. Monk he had had long discussions on abstract questions in politics,—and before the week was over was almost disposed to call himself a disciple, or, at least, a follower of Mr. Monk. Why not of Mr. Monk as well as of any one else? Mr. Monk was in the Cabinet, and of all the members of the Cabinet was the most advanced Liberal. "Lady Glencora was not so far wrong the other night," Mr. Monk said to him. "Equality is an ugly word and shouldn't be used. It misleads, and frightens, and is a bugbear. And she, in using it, had not perhaps a clearly defined meaning for it in her own mind. But the wish of every honest man should be to assist in lifting up those below him, till they be something nearer his own level than he finds them." To this Phineas assented,—and by degrees he found himself assenting to a great many things that Mr. Monk said to him.

Mr. Monk was a thin, tall, gaunt man, who had devoted his whole life to politics, hitherto without any personal reward beyond that which came to him from the reputation of his name, and from the honour of a seat in Parliament. He was one of four or five brothers, —and all besides him were in trade. They had prospered in trade, whereas he had prospered solely in politics; and men said that he was dependent altogether on what his relatives supplied for his support. He had now been in Parliament for more than twenty years, and had been known not only as a Radical but as a Democrat. Ten years since, when he had risen to fame, but not to repute, among the men who then governed England, nobody dreamed that Joshua Monk would ever be a paid servant of the Crown. He had inveighed against one minister after another as though they all deserved impeachment. He had advocated political doctrines which at that time seemed to be altogether at variance with any possibility of governing according to English rules of government. He had been regarded as a pestilent thorn in the sides of all ministers. But now he was a member of the Cabinet, and those whom he had terrified in the old days began to find that he was not so much unlike other men. There are but few horses whom you cannot put into harness, and those of the highest spirit will generally do your work the best.

Phineas, who had his eyes about him, thought that he could perceive that Mr. Palliser did not shoot a deer with Mr. Ratler, and that Mr. Gresham played no chess with Mr. Bonteen. Bonteen, indeed, was a noisy pushing man whom nobody seemed to like, and Phineas wondered why he should be at Loughlinter,—and why he should be in office. His friend Laurence Fitzgibbon had indeed once endeavoured to explain this. "A man who can vote hard, as I call it; and

who will speak a few words now and then as they're wanted, without any ambition that way, may always have his price. And if he has a pretty wife into the bargain, he ought to have a pleasant time of it." Mr. Ratler no doubt was a very useful man, who thoroughly knew his business; but yet, as it seemed to Phineas, no very great distinction was shown to Mr. Ratler at Loughlinter. "If I got as high as that," he said to himself, "I should think myself a miracle of luck. And yet nobody seems to think anything of Ratler. It is all nothing unless one can go to the very top."

"I believe I did right to accept office," Mr. Monk said to him one day, as they sat together on a rock close by one of the little bridges over the Linter. "Indeed, unless a man does so when the bonds of the office tendered to him are made compatible with his own views, he declines to proceed on the open path towards the prosecution of those views. A man who is combating one ministry after another, and striving to imbue those ministers with his convictions, can hardly decline to become a minister himself when he finds that those convictions of his own are henceforth,—or at least for some time to come,—to be the ministerial convictions of the day. Do you follow me?"

"Very clearly," said Phineas. "You would have denied your own children had you refused."

"Unless indeed a man were to feel that he was in some way unfitted for office work. I very nearly provided for myself an escape on that plea;—but when I came to sift it, I thought that it would be false. But let me tell you that the delight of political life is altogether in opposition. Why, it is freedom against slavery, fire against clay, movement against stagnation! The very inaccuracy which is permitted to opposition is in itself a charm worth more than all the patronage and all the prestige of ministerial power. You'll try them both, and then say if you do not agree with me. Give me the full swing of the benches below the gangway, where I needed to care for no one, and could always enjoy myself on my legs as long as I felt that I was true to those who sent me there! That is all over now. They have got me into harness, and my shoulders are sore. The oats, however, are of the best, and the hay is unexceptionable."

CHAPTER XV.

DONALD BEAN'S PONY.

PHINEAS liked being told that the pleasures of opposition and the pleasures of office were both open to him,—and he liked also to be the chosen receptacle of Mr. Monk's confidence. He had come to understand that he was expected to remain ten days at Loughlinter, and

that then there was to be a general movement. Since the first day he had seen but little of Mr. Kennedy, but he had found himself very frequently with Lady Laura. And then had come up the question of his projected trip to Paris with Lord Chiltern. He had received a letter from Lord Chiltern.

"DEAR FINN,

"Are you going to Paris with me?

"Yours, C."

There had been not a word beyond this, and before he answered it he made up his mind to tell Lady Laura the truth. He could not go to Paris because he had no money.

"I've just got that from your brother," said he.

"How like Oswald. He writes to me perhaps three times in the year, and his letters are just the same. You will go I hope?"

"Well;—no."

"I am sorry for that."

"I wonder whether I may tell you the real reason, Lady Laura."

"Nay;—I cannot answer that; but unless it be some political secret between you and Mr. Monk, I should think you might."

"I cannot afford to go to Paris this autumn. It seems to be a shocking admission to make,—though I don't know why it should be."

"Nor I;—but, Mr. Finn, I like you all the better for making it. I am very sorry, for Oswald's sake. It's so hard to find any companion for him whom he would like and whom we,—that is I,—should think altogether——; you know what I mean, Mr. Finn."

"Your wish that I should go with him is a great compliment, and I thoroughly wish that I could do it. As it is, I must go to Killaloe and retrieve my finances. I daresay, Lady Laura, you can hardly conceive how very poor a man I am." There was a melancholy tone about his voice as he said this, which made her think for the moment whether or no he had been right in going into Parliament, and whether she had been right in instigating him to do so. But it was too late to recur to that question now.

"You must climb into office early, and forego those pleasures of opposition which are so dear to Mr. Monk," she said, smiling. "After all, money is an accident which does not count nearly so high as do some other things. You and Mr. Kennedy have the same enjoyment of everything around you here."

"Yes; while it lasts."

"And Lady Glencora and I stand pretty much on the same footing, in spite of all her wealth,—except that she is a married woman. I do not know what she is worth,—something not to be counted; and I am worth—just what papa chooses to give me. A ten-pound

note at the present moment I should look upon as great riches." This was the first time she had ever spoken to him of her own position as regards money; but he had heard, or thought that he had heard, that she had been left a fortune altogether independent of her father.

The last of the ten days had now come, and Phineas was discontented and almost unhappy. The more he saw of Lady Laura the more he feared that it was impossible that she should become his wife. And yet from day to day his intimacy with her became more close. He had never made love to her, nor could he discover that it was possible for him to do so. She seemed to be a woman for whom all the ordinary stages of love-making were quite unsuitable. Of course he could declare his love and ask her to be his wife on any occasion on which he might find himself to be alone with her. And on this morning he made up his mind that he would do so before the day was over. It might be possible that she would never speak to him again;—that all the pleasures and ambitious hopes to which she had introduced him might be over as soon as that rash word should have been spoken! But, nevertheless, he would speak it.

On this day there was to be a grouse-shooting party, and the shooters were to be out early. It had been talked of for some day or two past, and Phineas knew that he could not escape it. There had been some rivalry between him and Mr. Bonteen, and there was to be a sort of match as to which of the two would kill most birds before lunch. But there had also been some half promise on Lady Laura's part that she would walk with him up the Linter and come down upon the lake, taking an opposite direction from that by which they had returned with Mr. Kennedy.

"But you will be shooting all day," she said, when he proposed it to her as they were starting for the moor. The waggonet that was to take them was at the door, and she was there to see them start. Her father was one of the shooting party, and Mr. Kennedy was another.

"I will undertake to be back in time, if you will not think it too hot. I shall not see you again till we meet in town next year."

"Then I certainly will go with you,—that is to say, if you are here. But you cannot return without the rest of the party, as you are going so far."

"I'll get back somehow," said Phineas, who was resolved that a few miles more or less of mountain should not detain him from the prosecution of a task so vitally important to him. "If we start at five that will be early enough."

"Quite early enough," said Lady Laura.

Phineas went off to the mountains, and shot his grouse, and won his match, and eat his luncheon. Mr. Bonteen, however, was not beaten by much, and was in consequence somewhat ill-humoured.

"I'll tell you what I'll do," said Mr. Bonteen, "I'll back myself for the rest of the day for a ten-pound note."

Now there had been no money staked on the match at all,—but it had been simply a trial of skill, as to which would kill the most birds in a given time. And the proposition for that trial had come from Mr. Bonteen himself. "I should not think of shooting for money," said Phineas.

"And why not? A bet is the only way to decide these things."

"Partly because I'm sure I shouldn't hit a bird," said Phineas, "and partly because I haven't got any money to lose."

"I hate bets," said Mr. Kennedy to him afterwards. "I was annoyed when Bonteen offered the wager. I felt sure, however, you would not accept it."

"I suppose such bets are very common."

"I don't think men ought to propose them unless they are quite sure of their company. Maybe I'm wrong, and I often feel that I am strait-laced about such things. It is so odd to me that men cannot amuse themselves without pitting themselves against each other. When a man tells me that he can shoot better than I, I tell him that my keeper can shoot better than he."

"All the same, it's a good thing to excel," said Phineas.

"I'm not so sure of that," said Mr. Kennedy. "A man who can kill more salmon than anybody else, can rarely do anything else. Are you going on with your match?"

"No; I'm going to make my way back to Loughlinter."

"Not alone?"

"Yes, alone."

"It's over nine miles. You can't walk it."

Phineas looked at his watch, and found that it was now two o'clock. It was a broiling day in August, and the way back to Loughlinter, for six or seven out of the nine miles, would be along a high road. "I must do it all the same," said he, preparing for a start. "I have an engagement with Lady Laura Standish; and as this is the last day that I shall see her, I certainly do not mean to break it."

"An engagement with Lady Laura," said Mr. Kennedy. "Why did you not tell me, that I might have a pony ready? But come along. Donald Bean has a pony. He's not much bigger than a dog, but he'll carry you to Loughlinter."

"I can walk it, Mr. Kennedy."

"Yes; and think of the state in which you'd reach Loughlinter! Come along with me."

"But I can't take you off the mountain," said Phineas.

"Then you must allow me to take you off."

So Mr. Kennedy led the way down to Donald Bean's cottage, and before three o'clock Phineas found himself mounted on a shaggy steed, which, in sober truth, was not much bigger than a large dog. "If

Mr. Kennedy is really my rival," said Phineas to himself, as he trotted along, "I almost think that I am doing an unhandsome thing in taking the pony."

At five o'clock he was under the portico before the front door, and there he found Lady Laura waiting for him,—waiting for him, or at least ready for him. She had on her hat and gloves and light shawl, and her parasol was in her hand. He thought that he had never seen her look so young, so pretty, and so fit to receive a lover's vows. But at the same moment it occurred to him that she was Lady Laura Standish, the daughter of an Earl, the descendant of a line of Earls,—and that he was the son of a simple country doctor in Ireland. Was it fitting that he should ask such a woman to be his wife? But then Mr. Kennedy was the son of a man who had walked into Glasgow with half-a-crown in his pocket. Mr. Kennedy's grandfather had been,—Phineas thought that he had heard that Mr. Kennedy's grandfather had been a Scotch drover; whereas his own grandfather had been a little squire near Ennistimon, in County Clare, and his own first cousin once removed still held the paternal acres at Finn Grove. His family was supposed to be descended from kings in that part of Ireland. It certainly did not become him to fear Lady Laura on the score of rank, if it was to be allowed to Mr. Kennedy to proceed without fear on that head. As to wealth, Lady Laura had already told him that her fortune was no greater than his. Her statement to himself on that head made him feel that he should not hesitate on the score of money. They neither had any, and he was willing to work for both. If she feared the risk, let her say so.

It was thus that he argued with himself; but yet he knew,—knew as well as the reader will know,—that he was going to do that which he had no right to do. It might be very well for him to wait,—presuming him to be successful in his love,—for the opening of that oyster with his political sword, that oyster on which he proposed that they should both live; but such waiting could not well be to the taste of Lady Laura Standish. It could hardly be pleasant to her to look forward to his being made a junior lord or an assistant secretary before she could establish herself in her home. So he told himself. And yet he told himself at the same time that it was incumbent on him to persevere.

"I did not expect you in the least," said Lady Laura.

"And yet I spoke very positively."

"But there are things as to which a man may be very positive, and yet may be allowed to fail. In the first place, how on earth did you get home?"

"Mr. Kennedy got me a pony,—Donald Bean's pony."

"You told him, then?"

"Yes; I told him why I was coming, and that I must be here. Then he took the trouble to come all the way off the mountain to

persuade Donald to lend me his pony. I must acknowledge that Mr. Kennedy has conquered me at last."

"I'm so glad of that," said Lady Laura. "I knew he would,—unless it were your own fault."

Then they went up the path by the brook, from bridge to bridge, till they found themselves out upon the open mountain at the top. Phineas had resolved that he would not speak out his mind till he found himself on that spot; that then he would ask her to sit down, and that while she was so seated he would tell her everything. At the present moment he had on his head a Scotch cap with a grouse's feather in it, and he was dressed in a velvet shooting-jacket and dark knickerbockers; and was certainly, in this costume, as handsome a man as any woman would wish to see. And there was, too, a look of breeding about him which had come to him, no doubt, from the royal Finns of old, which ever served him in great stead. He was, indeed, only Phineas Finn, and was known by the world to be no more; but he looked as though he might have been anybody,—a royal Finn himself. And then he had that special grace of appearing to be altogether unconscious of his own personal advantages. And I think that in truth he was barely conscious of them; that he depended on them very little, if at all; that there was nothing of personal vanity in his composition. He had never indulged in any hope that Lady Laura would accept him because he was a handsome man.

"After all that climbing," he said, "will you not sit down for a moment?" As he spoke to her she looked at him and told herself that he was as handsome as a god. "Do sit down for one moment," he said. "I have something that I desire to say to you, and to say it here."

"I will," she said; "but I also have something to tell you, and will say it while I am yet standing. Yesterday I accepted an offer of marriage from Mr. Kennedy."

"Then I am too late," said Phineas, and putting his hands into the pockets of his coat, he turned his back upon her, and walked away across the mountain.

What a fool he had been to let her know his secret when her knowledge of it could be of no service to him,—when her knowledge of it could only make him appear foolish in her eyes! But for his life he could not have kept his secret to himself. Nor now could he bring himself to utter a word of even decent civility. But he went on walking as though he could thus leave her there, and never see her again. What an ass he had been in supposing that she cared for him! What a fool to imagine that his poverty could stand a chance against the wealth of Loughlinter! But why had she lured him on? How he wished that he were now grinding hard at work in Mr. Low's chambers, or sitting at home at Killaloe with the hand of that pretty little Irish girl within his own!

Presently he heard a voice behind him,—calling him gently. Then he turned and found that she was very near him. He himself had then been standing still for some moments, and she had followed him. "Mr. Finn," she said.

"Well;—yes: what is it?" And turning round he made an attempt to smile.

"Will you not wish me joy, or say a word of congratulation? Had I not thought much of your friendship, I should not have been so quick to tell you of my destiny. No one else has been told, except papa."

"Of course I hope you will be happy. Of course I do. No wonder he lent me the pony!"

"You must forget all that."

"Forget what?"

"Well,—nothing. You need forget nothing," said Lady Laura, "for nothing has been said that need be regretted. Only wish me joy, and all will be pleasant."

"Lady Laura, I do wish you joy, with all my heart;—but that will not make all things pleasant. I came up here to ask you to be my wife."

"No;—no, no; do not say it."

"But I have said it, and will say it again. I, poor, penniless, plain simple fool that I am, have been ass enough to love you, Lady Laura Standish; and I brought you up here to-day to ask you to share with me—my nothingness. And this I have done on soil that is to be all your own. Tell me that you regard me as a conceited fool,—as a bewildered idiot."

"I wish to regard you as a dear friend,—both of my own and of my husband," said she, offering him her hand.

"Should I have had a chance, I wonder, if I had spoken a week since?"

"How can I answer such a question, Mr. Finn? Or, rather, I will answer it fully. It is not a week since we told each other, you to me and I to you, that we were both poor,—both without other means than those which come to us from our fathers. You will make your way;—will make it surely; but how at present could you marry any woman unless she had money of her own? For me,—like so many other girls, it was necessary that I should stay at home or marry some one rich enough to dispense with fortune in a wife. The man whom in all the world I think the best has asked me to share everything with him;—and I have thought it wise to accept his offer."

"And I was fool enough to think that you loved me," said Phineas. To this she made no immediate answer. "Yes, I was. I feel that I owe it you to tell you what a fool I have been. I did. I thought you loved me. At least I thought that perhaps you loved me. It was like a child wanting the moon;—was it not?"

"And why should I not have loved you?" she said slowly, laying her hand gently upon his arm.

"Why not? Because Loughlinter——"

"Stop, Mr. Finn; stop. Do not say to me any unkind word that I have not deserved, and that would make a breach between us. I have accepted the owner of Loughlinter as my husband, because I verily believe that I shall thus best do my duty in that sphere of life to which it has pleased God to call me. I have always liked him, and I will love him. For you,—may I trust myself to speak openly to you?"

"You may trust me as against all others, except us two ourselves."

"For you, then, I will say also that I have always liked you since I knew you; that I have loved you as a friend;—and could have loved you otherwise had not circumstances showed me so plainly that it would be unwise."

"Oh, Lady Laura!"

"Listen a moment. And pray remember that what I say to you now must never be repeated to any ears. No one knows it but my father, my brother, and Mr. Kennedy. Early in the spring I paid my brother's debts. His affection to me is more than a return for what I have done for him. But when I did this,—when I made up my mind to do it, I made up my mind also that I could not allow myself the same freedom of choice which would otherwise have belonged to me. Will that be sufficient, Mr. Finn?"

"How can I answer you, Lady Laura? Sufficient! And you are not angry with me for what I have said?"

"No, I am not angry. But it is understood, of course, that nothing of this shall ever be repeated,—even among ourselves. Is that a bargain?"

"Oh, yes. I shall never speak of it again."

"And now you will wish me joy?"

"I have wished you joy, Lady Laura. And I will do so again. May you have every blessing which the world can give you. You cannot expect me to be very jovial for awhile myself; but there will be nobody to see my melancholy moods. I shall be hiding myself away in Ireland. When is the marriage to be?"

"Nothing has been said of that. I shall be guided by him,—but there must, of course, be delay. There will be settlements and I know not what. It may probably be in the spring,—or perhaps the summer. I shall do just what my betters tell me to do."

Phineas had now seated himself on the exact stone on which he had wished her to sit when he proposed to tell his own story, and was looking forth upon the lake. It seemed to him that everything had been changed for him while he had been up there upon the mountain, and that the change had been marvellous in its nature. When he had

been coming up, there had been apparently two alternatives before him: the glory of successful love,—which, indeed, had seemed to him to be a most improbable result of the coming interview,—and the despair and utter banishment attendant on disdainful rejection. But his position was far removed from either of these alternatives. She had almost told him that she would have loved him had she not been poor,—that she was beginning to love him and had quenched her love, because it had become impossible to her to marry a poor man. In such circumstances he could not be angry with her,—he could not quarrel with her; he could not do other than swear to himself that he would be her friend. And yet he loved her better than ever;—and she was the promised wife of his rival! Why had not Donald Bean's pony broken his neck?

"Shall we go down now?" she said.

"Oh, yes."

"You will not go on by the lake?"

"What is the use? It is all the same now. You will want to be back to receive him in from shooting."

"Not that, I think. He is above those little cares. But it will be as well we should go the nearest way, as we have spent so much of our time here. I shall tell Mr. Kennedy that I have told you,—if you do not mind."

"Tell him what you please," said Phineas.

"But I won't have it taken in that way, Mr. Finn. Your brusque want of courtesy to me I have forgiven, but I shall expect you to make up for it by the alacrity of your congratulations to him. I will not have you uncourteous to Mr. Kennedy."

"If I have been uncourteous I beg your pardon."

"You need not do that. We are old friends, and may take the liberty of speaking plainly to each other;—but you will owe it to Mr. Kennedy to be gracious. Think of the pony."

They walked back to the house together, and as they went down the path very little was said. Just as they were about to come out upon the open lawn, while they were still under cover of the rocks and shrubs, Phineas stopped his companion by standing before her, and then he made his farewell speech to her.

"I must say good-bye to you. I shall be away early in the morning."

"Good-bye, and God bless you," said Lady Laura.

"Give me your hand," said he. And she gave him her hand. "I don't suppose you know what it is to love dearly."

"I hope I do."

"But to be in love! I believe you do not. And to miss your love! I think,—I am bound to think that you have never been so tormented. It is very sore;—but I will do my best, like a man, to get over it."

"Do, my friend, do. So small a trouble will never weigh heavily on shoulders such as yours."

"It will weigh very heavily, but I will struggle hard that it may not crush me. I have loved you so dearly! As we are parting, give me one kiss, that I may think of it and treasure it in my memory?" What murmuring words she spoke to express her refusal of such a request, I will not quote; but the kiss had been taken before the denial was completed, and then they walked on in silence together,—and in peace, towards the house.

On the next morning six or seven men were going away, and there was an early breakfast. There were none of the ladies there, but Mr. Kennedy, the host, was among his friends. A large drag with four horses was there to take the travellers and their luggage to the station, and there was naturally a good deal of noise at the front door as the preparations for the departure were made. In the middle of them Mr. Kennedy took our hero aside. "Laura has told me," said Mr. Kennedy, "that she has acquainted you with my good fortune."

"And I congratulate you most heartily," said Phineas, grasping the other's hand. "You are indeed a lucky fellow."

"I feel myself to be so," said Mr. Kennedy. "Such a wife was all that was wanting to me, and such a wife is very hard to find. Will you remember, Finn, that Loughlinter will never be so full but what there will be a room for you, or so empty but what you will be made welcome. I say this on Lady Laura's part, and on my own."

Phineas, as he was being carried away to the railway station, could not keep himself from speculating as to how much Kennedy knew of what had taken place during the walk up the Linter. Of one small circumstance that had occurred, he felt quite sure that Mr. Kennedy knew nothing.

SAINT PAULS.

FEBRUARY, 1868.

ALL FOR GREED.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BRIDEGROOM.

TIME wore on, the winter passed over, and early in the spring Monsieur de Vérancour had been brought to regard as admissible the event which had at first appeared in his sight as so enormously ridiculous;—the possible marriage, namely, of his eldest daughter with Richard Prévost.

It must not, however, be supposed that this was easily accomplished. Félicie did not find it sufficient to gain one or two isolated battles; she had a complete campaign to undertake, and her final victory was due only to her patience and consummate good generalship. She never lost her temper and never lost a point; but let what would be the insignificance of her gain of the previous day, she always contrived to add some small gain to it on the following one, so that, in the course of a month or two, by dint of clever treatment, the Vicomte got quite accustomed to his new position, and, in the prospects of her future wealth, consented to lose sight of the fact that his daughter would become the wife of a valet de chambre's grandson. One thing was settled at the very outset, and that was, that the matter should be kept secret; that no word of the future engagement should transpire; and that not until Monsieur Richard had left D——, and taken rank in the department as Monsieur de Châteaubréville, should he be presumed to have aspired to the honour of Mademoiselle de Vérancour's hand.

What principally disposed the Vicomte in favour of the coming mésalliance was, that, besides the wealth of the bridegroom, the whole proceeding had about it a character of barter that was serious and satisfactory. There was nothing sentimental in the whole concern. All was business-like and full of calculation. Had the unfortunate Monsieur Richard put himself in the light of an aspiring lover,

of a man who, for the sake of becoming Félicie's husband, would sacrifice every other earthly consideration in life, it is probable that the young lady herself would have crushed his hopes with withering contempt, and it is certain that on such terms the Vicomte would never have consented to accept Monsieur Richard as his son-in-law. But the latter was wise enough to understand this, and he never once alluded to the possibility of his marriage being anything more than a business transaction. This put all parties at their ease, and made the situation clear and comprehensible. Monsieur Richard, having a very large fortune, which, situated as he was, could be of no use to him, found means, through the condescension of the Vérancour family, of securing to himself a status in society, and of being admitted to spend his money among people of birth and rank. This, of course, could not be purchased at too high a rate, and, in fact, Monsieur Richard got it a vast deal too cheap. On the other hand, Mademoiselle Félicie, instead of being condemned to lead a life of single blessedness in an out-of-the-way province, with not enough to live upon decently, acquired the free disposal of an income much exceeding that of the most fashionable ladies for several miles round. This was as it should be, and there was a sense of fitness in the fact of a Vérancour enjoying a hundred thousand francs a year.

The work of renovation and embellishment at Châteaubréville went on apace, and would have been in an advanced stage of completion, had it not been for poor Monsieur Richard's health. The winter had been extremely severe, and the unlucky young man had been a frequent sufferer. His lungs were said to be delicate, though the fact was made a matter of dispute between two rival practitioners; the old doctor at D—— declaring for the weakness of the chest, and a young doctor, lately settled at Cholet, taking the part of "nerves," and at most only tolerating the notion of bronchial susceptibility. But then this new disciple of Æsculapius was a man who made light of everything, according to the way of the modern Parisian school. It was a wonder he believed in death,—some said he called it an accident,—and he did not promise to have any success in his provincial sphere. He treated poor Monsieur Richard somewhat severely, never called him "poor" at all, and shrugged his shoulders at those who did. He openly declared that the ailments of Monsieur Richard were only laziness and self-indulgence, and told him to his face that he would never be well till he took more exercise, lived more in the air, washed more in cold water, and ate fewer sweetmeats. He affirmed that whatever harm there was, came from the liver and the mucous membrane, and that the patient's absurd mode of life was answerable for the whole. But then this young man, Doctor Javal by name, was of a hard and unkind nature, and did not sympathise readily with people who complained overmuch.

It is certain that Monsieur Richard's mode of living was unwholesome, but that struck no one else, for it always has been a theory in France,—in the provinces above all,—that the amount of pampering a man enjoys should be measured only by the power of paying for that whereby you are to be pampered. Therefore, Monsieur Richard, being rich, was quite right to indulge himself in every possible way,—as he did. The atmosphere he kept up in his room was that of a forcing-house, and when he went out of doors he muffled himself up into a permanent state of perspiration. He had ordered down a neat little brougham from Tours, and drove about with shut windows and a foot-warmer,—never walking save on the brighest, warmest days, and for very short distances. Warm baths he allowed himself with the approbation of the old doctor at D——, who was for ever vaunting their "cooling and calming action!" And sweetmeats he indulged in to a degree that met with the approbation of no one at all,—not even of Madame Jean, who had to make them. Altogether the winter had severely tried Monsieur Richard, and his appearance was unhealthy, as he would sit shivering over the fire in the salon of the Château, where the inmates never attained beyond a very moderate degree of warmth.

With all this, his impatience to be in the full enjoyment of his riches seemed daily to increase in ardour. He was fretful with desire to see the house at Châteaubréville fit to be inhabited, and would sometimes avow to Mademoiselle Félicie that he counted the days and hours till he should have entered upon his new duties as head of one of the principal establishments in the department. Curiously enough, by degrees, as the state of his health became less satisfactory, fortune appeared intent upon favouring him more. An enterprise in which his uncle had invested a considerable sum, full fifteen years ago, a copper mine in Chili, and which had been supposed to be an unlucky venture, suddenly turned up a prize, and Monsieur Richard found himself, from day to day, far richer than he thought. It was evident now that he would enter upon his proprietorship of Châteaubréville without having to deduct from his capital the amount that the improvements there would have cost. Well, Monsieur Richard was a lucky man! Only it was just at this identical moment that his health gave symptoms of the greatest weakness.

"Compensation!" said the public of D——; and perhaps it was so. Perhaps it would not have been just if, in addition to his extraordinary good luck in every other respect, Monsieur Richard had had the robust health and solid nervous system of some others who have their livelihood to earn. It is a just dispensation of Providence that the possession of great joys and the power of enjoying them seldom go together; it consoles those who have only the capacity for enjoyment without anything to enjoy, and prevents them from cutting their neighbours' throats, or their own.

But what would most have surprised any English observer, had

he had occasion to examine minutely the feelings of the various persons we have introduced to him, would have been to notice the comparative absence of what is usually called "feeling" in any one of them.

Here was a father about to see one of his daughters take the gravest step that ever is taken in a woman's life; here was a girl under twenty about to assume upon herself the responsibilities of wedlock; and here was a man about to give all his worldly advantages for the privilege of calling this girl his;—yet in all this, where was the love;—where the sentiment, compared to which everything else is as nothing?

Monsieur de Vérancour, amongst all the objections he saw to Félicie's marriage with Richard Prévost, never adverted to the possible existence of a moral one; never so much as asked himself whether she would be happy with this man, or whether she could be pure and worthy and good;—whether, at the end of a few years of such a union the immortal part of her would be better, nobler than now, or weakened and debased? He simply did not think of anything of the kind, because no one that he ever heard of was in the habit of so doing, and because his duty was merely to place, to establish his children;—having done which, he was entitled to hold up his hands to the Almighty, like Simeon, and chaunt his Nunc Dimittis in all confidence. Monsieur de Vérancour was, as times go, a very excellent father; and no one in their senses would dream of demanding from him an iota more than what he was doing.

And Félicie?

Félicie was, according to the worldly morals of France, a thoroughly right-minded person,—a person upon whom you could count. This means that all the figures you take the trouble to cast up in relation to her would be found correct; all the calculations you make would be unerring, because you never would have to fear one of those perturbations which are brought about by the ill-regulated, comet-like vagaries of a sentiment. Félicie was reliable. I will not speculate upon what a lover or even a friend might wish, but depend upon it there is not in all France a father or mother who would not be full of pride and delight if heaven sent them only such a daughter as Félicie de Vérancour.

As to Monsieur Richard, the future bridegroom of the fascinating Félicie, his nature was too thoroughly feeble a one to bear the strong tree of love; but he was possessed by an unceasing desire to call the girl his, and only refrained from manifesting it because his instinct told him that such a manifestation would be prejudicial to his interests.

One person alone, in this assemblage of eminently reasonable individuals, was unlike the rest, and that person was Vévette. She was a stray flower in this garden of pot-herbs, a wild rose upon the wall destined only to foster fruit. Such being the nature of her character

and life, Vévette was not regarded by those around her as altogether safe; and, if she had not been such a very child, she would have been narrowly watched, and made to undergo a due and proper course of training. It was tacitly understood between the Vicomte and his eldest daughter that whenever the latter became Madame de Châteaubréville, and was the sovereign mistress of her magnificent household, she should take her younger sister to live with her, and do the best she could for her advancement in life. Vévette's "turn," as she had practically expressed it, would then come, and neither Félicie nor her father had the slightest doubt of how exemplary it would be on their parts to contrive that that "turn" should be an advantageous one.

The whole of poor little Vévette's life had been of a kind to mislead her in all her appreciations of herself and of others. She had lost her mother too young to have seen, from her example, how perfect a merely loving woman, aiming at nothing loftier, could be; and she was far too humble to imagine that whatever instinctive sentiment she possessed could be otherwise than blameable. Of course, her convent education had been for her, with her peculiar disposition towards timidity and diffidence, the worst possible education. Convent discipline, the most enlightened as well as the worst, can seldom or never be good for any save the haughty and rebellious in spirit, whom it does sometimes modify, and to whom it teaches worldly wisdom as well as the justice of concession. To the naturally meek and humble, convent discipline is simply destruction. It roots up self-reliance and preaches dependence as a virtue, and you may pretty surely predict of a convent favourite that her notions of right and wrong are not innate, but imposed upon her from without.

Now, although poor little Vévette's nature was too sweet and pure a one to be spoilt by all these mistakes of education, her peace of mind was destroyed by them, and her simplicity of heart perturbed. Whilst in reality all her own native instincts were towards the fair and the noble and the generous, she was driven into being perpetually at war with herself, and into believing that whatever she thought, or wished, or did, must be wrong. On all sides she had heard her sister lauded as the pattern of everything a woman should be, and her own inmost soul, when questioned, told her she could not be like Félicie.

It was one of the causes of her love for Raoul, that, recognising as he did the beauty of her nature, he gave her—whether she would or not—a kind of trust in herself. The great cause of the love, however, was the impossibility of avoiding it. They were left to themselves, and they loved, just as it was natural they should do. But this was precisely one of poor Vévette's greatest troubles. From the same source whence she had drawn her piety, her faith in all divine truths, from that same source flowed a doctrine which condemned her to be incessantly at war with herself. That nature was to be

vanquished, and that all Love was a sin;—this was the doctrine of her teachers. And what was she to do with such teaching as this?

Instead of loving frankly and gladly, and hopefully and strongly, and finding virtue in the truth of devotion, the poor child struggled against what was best and noblest in herself, and though with her whole heart she loved Raoul, the innocence of the passion was overcast, and she was doomed to the torture of an unquiet conscience, and to what was worse still, the knowledge that far from bringing happiness to him she best loved, she, by her own uncertainties and alarms, brought him perpetual perplexity and pain.

But in this little out-of-the-way town of D——, events were in store which threatened to force the persons we have been attempting to describe out of their conventional parts into the real characters which had been allotted to them in the grave and serious drama of life.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BRIDE.

As the domain of Châteaubréville lay at the other side of the department, to the north-east, if you went from D—— by the road, it was a good half-day's work to get there. The usual manner of performing the journey was to drive over to one of the railway stations on the banks of the Loire, and from thence proceed by rail to the post town nearest to the château itself, whence a vehicle could be despatched to meet you.

This was Monsieur Richard's mode of proceeding, and it had now become his habit, when he went over to inspect his future residence, to pass one night always, and occasionally two or three, at the château. It took four hours of tolerably good driving, with a rest of half-an-hour at the half-way auberge, to get from D—— to the station, and another good hour and a half were required before landing you at the hall door of Châteaubréville. The expedition, therefore, was not possible in the short days of winter. But Monsieur Richard was growing very anxious that his future wife should give her opinion upon some of the interior arrangements of what was to be her home, and his anxiety would, if he had dared, have been tiresome; as it was, it was only fidgety, and he was for ever recurring to his fear lest too much delay would be engendered by the want of certain details being positively fixed upon. March was drawing to an end, and the weather had, for the last ten days, been singularly fine, the genial warmth of the sun bringing forth vegetation in what was an exceptional manner even for the soft climate of western France.

It was decided to take a journey to Monsieur Richard's new estate, but to take it in a form that should not awaken the curiosity of the inhabitants of D——. Monsieur Richard himself was to go over to

Châteaubréville the day before, pass the night there, and prepare everything for the reception of the Vicomte and his daughters on the morrow. The remarkable old conveyance which, in the days of the Restoration, had been a calèche, drawn by two stout percherons, was ordered out, and Baptiste, in his time-worn livery, prepared to get all the work he could out of the one aged horse which on such like occasions had the honour of transporting the Vérancour equipage of state from place to place.

Why his master and his family were going early in the morning to the N—— station Baptiste did not guess, which was no wonder, seeing that Baptiste was not bright; but the lynx-eyed Suzette, his better half, did not guess it either, which was wonderful. So the Vicomte and the two girls really did accomplish their journey without all the gossips in D—— knowing whither they were bent, and the general opinion was that they had gone to see the Mère Supérieure of a very famous convent on the Nantes Line, in order to arrange for the noviciate of Mademoiselle Vévette, who was all but certain one day to take the veil.

The N—— station was reached, the down train duly caught, and the party safely set down at the village where Monsieur Richard was to be found in waiting. And there he was sure enough, and all four packed themselves into the vehicle he had brought for their convenience; and the big, finely gilt clock just over the vestibule door was striking one when they got out at what was one day to be Félicie's future home.

The few hours allotted to the visitors—they were forced to leave again at a little after five—were, as you will easily conceive, amply employed by all they had to see. Félicie proved herself thoroughly equal to the duties of her future position, and inspected everything as though she had all her life been the mistress of a large house, and reigned over a numerous establishment. Nothing was beyond or beneath her; nothing, in fact, out of her competency. She dived down into the kitchens, and soared up into the attics, authoritatively decreeing what was requisite for each individual servant as long as he or she was "in the exercise of their functions" for the master's benefit, and how little was sufficient for them when they were consigned to the privacy of their own rooms. She was brilliant on the subject of pantries, larders, and store-closets, and hit upon all the dry corners in which it was best to keep provisions and linen; and in the wash-houses absolute inspiration visited her, and she overturned all the plans which had been adopted for heating the caldrons, substituting for them others which were, as she victoriously showed, far more economical. The architect who had been appointed to meet them, and who knew nothing of the names of the persons with whom he spoke, was penetrated with admiration of the wise and omniscient Félicie, and could not help repeating at every fresh defeat of his com-

binations by her suggestions—"Voilà une petite dame bien entendue!"

Poor Vévette felt, as usual, thoroughly crushed into nothing by her sister's superiority. So did the Vicomte; but then he liked it, which Vévette did not. No true woman can bear to think of herself as femininely inferior, that is, inferior in those qualities which constitute a woman. The decision and practical ability of Félicie overawed Vévette; and feeling that nothing could ever make her emulate her sister's virtues, she began to regard herself as useless, i.e., incapable of imparting happiness; and the inevitable consequence was discouragement and deep self-dissatisfaction. Poor Vévette! She resolutely admired Félicie because she had been told to do so from childhood upwards, but do what she would, she felt she could not like her ways.

This visit to Châteaubréville was a sore trial for Monsieur Richard, for almost all the arrangements to which he had been consenting for four months were disputed and in most cases changed. Of course, on the alterations made in the inside of the house Monsieur Richard had never given an opinion,—he had none,—but had allowed his architect to go his own way, and the architect had aimed chiefly at two things—filling his own pockets, and giving to the general aspect of the dwelling a sufficient air of richness. In neither of these aims did Mademoiselle Félicie at all acquiesce, and she made comparatively short work with the bourgeois-like splendour which was about to flaunt from every wall and window of the "renovated" old place.

"What on earth has made you think that the panels in this small drawing-room should be gilt?" asked she, smiling, but with at the same time an air of such exquisite impertinence that a spectator must have had a curious idea of what the husband's life would be who would daily endure such treatment. "What is the use of gilding here?"

"It is richer," replied both Monsieur Richard and his architect at once.

The elegant Félicie curled her lip, and used an inexpressibly disdainful accent whilst echoing the word "richer!" And she meant this as much for her own sire as for Monsieur Richard, for she could not avoid seeing that the Vicomte was every bit as unable to resist the temptation of what was gaudy as was his base-born son-in-law elect.

"Why, what would you furnish these salons with?" she continued, always imperturbably smiling, and looking so pretty! "Would you hang them with crimson damask?"

"Crimson damask is very handsome," observed the architect, rather abashed.

"Then what is to become of your beautiful old meuble in white wood, and Beauvais tapestry, which is absolutely priceless for any connoisseur?"

"Well," ventured to remark Monsieur Richard, "Monsieur and I thought of putting that into the rooms up-stairs, and——"

But she quickly cut him short, and laid her law of elegance down, which was manifestly to be without appeal. "No one but parvenus," said she, mercilessly, though in honey-sweet tones, "ever put gilding and silk or satin stuffs into country houses. Richness, or even pomp, is all very well for a Paris residence, and in your drawing-rooms in Paris you can be as lavish of gold and crimson damask, within a certain measure, as you choose; but freshness is the notion that ought to be inspired by the aspect of a country abode. Renovate, by all means, the old boiseries of these salons, but keep them what they are; wood, plain wood, white upon pearl grey, and no gold!—for Heaven's sake, no gold!"

Monsieur Richard looked utterly disappointed, and as if half his satisfaction in his wealth were taken from him. He pleaded for just a little "show," for here and there a patch of garish colouring or of costly material, and finding no other, he invariably made use of the same argument, and vaunted the richness of what he proposed. Against all the delicate-tinted, though perhaps a little faded, Beauvais and Gobelins furniture, which Mademoiselle de Vérancour advocated, he opposed his bran new, gorgeous tissues, of which he lugged about a huge roll of patterns. "See how rich this is!" he repeatedly said.

"But it is bad in taste!" was the only answer he got, and this answer reduced him to silence. And so it was with everything. What he had thought fair or fitting was not discussed, or superseded by something fairer or more fitting; but the standard by which he could by any possibility judge of its fittingness or fairness was not explained to him. He was put from the starting-point out of the pale of whatsoever was connected with taste!

And I don't say that, from the artistic point of view, Mademoiselle Félicie was wrong, for I am tolerably certain that no teaching and no change of habits could ever have given Richard Prévost the fine perceptions that are requisite to be able to judge the beauty of external objects, just as probably no mere circumstance would have ever destroyed them in Félicie. But it was a hard case, for here were this man and this woman about to enter upon a compact to exist side by side during the term of their natural lives, without one single point in their respective modes of life being otherwise than calculated to keep them morally asunder.

They went through the house, up-stairs and down-stairs, and every step made it evident how perfectly at home Félicie would be in this fine old mansion when she came to be its mistress, and how no amount of mastership would ever make of Richard Prévost anything else save an intruder. But though each, perhaps, may have instinctively felt this, neither saw in it anything which appeared like a warning, and the man was as ready as before to buy the wife who

would despise him, and the wife equally ready to accept the husband with whom while she lived she could never have one single moment's community of thought.

They rambled through the gardens and shrubberies, and visited greenhouses and poultry-yards and stables, and here, as indoors, the captivating Félicie promulgated her dogmas, and put out of the question all attempt at a retort or a counter-objection by the fatal sentence: "It is not the proper thing," or "It is bad taste."

When the time came for going, Mademoiselle Félicie was well pleased with her expedition, and when she stepped into the vehicle which was to take them back to the station, she felt that upon the whole she had spent a pleasant day. Monsieur Richard could not make up his mind as to whether the day had been altogether a pleasant one to him, and for the first time since they had met, the future father and son-in-law cherished a sort of mutual sympathy; for they had been equally snubbed by the same person.

At the N—— station who should they meet but the Curé of D——, who had been sent for by the bishop, and was returning to his parish by a late train. They made him the offer of a fifth place in the venerable old calèche, which necessitated the pitiless squeezing together of the two young ladies, but thoroughly convinced Baptiste that the object of the journey had really been the convent at which Mademoiselle Vévette would one day take the veil.

It was striking seven when they started on their homeward course, but the old horse, eager for his stables, did his best, and Baptiste affirmed that they should reach D—— before the four hours actually required would be over. The night was a warm but windy one; fitful, as the finest nights in early spring are wont to be, and after the moon had silvered the whole road before them and the tall trees along its edge, her light would be suddenly eclipsed by the dusky veil of some swiftly drifting clouds. "We are going through your property here, are we not, Monsieur le Vicomte?" asked the Curé, as the carriage jolted out of a very ill-repaired by-way into a tolerably smooth road skirted by young woods.

"No, no; that's none of mine," was the reply. "I wish it were. Les Grandes Bruyères lie much higher up to the left. We have just come across old Rivière's fields, and at this moment we are entering on Monsieur Richard's woods."

"A valuable property," suggested the Curé.

"Humph!" grunted the Vicomte. "Yes, valuable enough, but atrociously ill kept, I must say."

"What can one do?" objected Monsieur Richard. "It would be the work of an active stout-bodied man to superintend the cuttings hereabouts. I know that, and old Prosper is assuredly not fit for the post; but if I were to turn him away what would become of the old fellow? He is already in a very shaky state of health."

"More than that even, Monsieur Richard," replied the Curé; "the man seems to me absolutely shattered; he is so wasted away as to be but the shadow of himself; and his temper is strangely gloomy."

"Have you seen him lately?" inquired Monsieur Richard eagerly.

"Not very lately,—and you?"

"Oh! I never see him," was the prompt rejoinder. "When he comes, he sees Madame Jean, or he goes to the notary."

"Poor old man!" said Vévette gently; "his must be a sad life up all alone there in his woods. Was he always quite alone in the world?"

"As long as I have known him, always," answered Monsieur Richard.

"Yes," added the Curé, "and as far as I know, he was always of the same unsociable disposition; a born solitaire, but, after his fashion, sincerely pious."

"Poor old man!" said Vévette again.

The carriage rolled and jolted on, and the third quarter past ten was just to be heard from the church belfry as it came upon the stones at the entrance into D——. "There ends my land," said Monsieur Richard, as he pointed to a steep wooded bank just outside the town which sloped down into the road. "Up that little path you can go on to the very top of the hill and past M. Rivière's new farm."

"And straight up to old Prosper's hut," added the Vicomte. "I know the road well, and take it often out shooting. There's somebody coming down it now;—just look! It never can be old Prosper at this hour." The moon at this moment was shining very brightly, and gave plainly to view the figure of a man coming out of the little winding path into the road. He was evidently about to cross it, but was stopped by the advance of the old horse that was trotting forwards under Baptiste's whip. He drew up and waited. The carriage passed, and as it did so the moonbeams fell full upon his face.

"Why, it's Raoul!" exclaimed Félicie.

"Nonsense!" said her father. "Raoul's in Paris doing his office work."

"Besides, what should he be about in the middle of the night on a lonely path leading only through my woods?" muttered Monsieur Richard. "I don't suppose he has conferences with Prosper up in his hut."

"I don't mind that," continued Félicie; "it was Raoul."

Vévette felt a shudder go through her whole being, without knowing what it was that affrighted her.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LITANIES FOR THE DEAD.

A few days went by, and it was found to have really been Raoul de Morville whom the Vérancours had seen coming down into the road on the night of their return from Châteaubréville. But the way in which this was found out was rather strange, and did not leave a very satisfactory impression. Raoul had called upon the Vicomte, and stated that a sudden illness of his father's had summoned him from Paris, and that he had obtained a month's leave of absence from his office. Old Morville had had a kind of paralytic seizure, and was very weak and ailing; but no one in D—— had heard of this, for little or no intercourse was kept up between the inhabitants of the town and those of La Morvillière.

"When did you come, Raoul?" asked Félicie, carelessly.

"On Wednesday," was the answer.

"Why, Raoul," was the rejoinder, with a mocking smile, "you positively do not know what you are saying. You came on Tuesday, and you have been here four whole days without coming to see us. Oh! don't deny it, for we saw you on Tuesday night coming down into the road by the path leading from the woods. Surely you must have remarked us. You must have recognised Baptiste in the moonlight."

Raoul looked singularly annoyed and embarrassed, and at last ended by admitting that he had arrived on the Tuesday night, and that, not finding the D—— diligence at the station, he had come on foot, taking a short road across the hill and through the woods.

"Short road if you will, my lad," observed the Vicomte; "but it's a good fourteen miles' walk."

"And I really cannot think how you came not to see the carriage. The moon was quite bright just then," persisted Félicie.

"Well, I think I remember that I did see a carriage," replied young Morville; "but I certainly did not recognise the man who was driving it. I suppose I was thinking of something else."

"You must have been deeply absorbed in your thoughts then," exclaimed Félicie; "for Baptiste is not precisely a microscopical personage, and you have known him ever since he used to wheel us all together up and down the garden in his barrow."

Raoul was evidently uncomfortable, Félicie was malicious in her playfulness, and Vévette was miserable, she neither knew why nor wherefore. The whole was unsatisfactory and odd. Every one thought so, but no one said it.

Vévette felt that some harm threatened Raoul de Morville. What might be its nature, or whence it came, she knew not, but the instinct was as strong as it was sure; and from the moment in which this unmistakable touch of reality came upon her, all the fictions of her education flew to the winds. Raoul was in danger, and now she

knew how she loved him. What the danger was, what the harm that menaced him,—that she could not define; but in the dread of his having to pass through some hard and terrible suffering, everything else was lost to her sight. She did not stop to discuss whether it was wrong to love thus; she did not ask herself even whether she should ever be Raoul's wife; she simply felt that she would risk life, happiness, everything, sooner than that harm should come to him.

Raoul had avowed,—or rather he had not denied to her, on the last day when they met;—that he had some "trouble." What was it? How could she find out? How could she help him? Poor Vévette's experience of life was as limited as that of a child, and all that she did know led her to suppose that no one had any grief unconnected with money. Since she was in existence she had always heard talk of money, and always been forced to conclude from what she heard that the aim of every one's life was to keep his own money and add to it that of other people. It is true she had been invariably taught that the mere possessors of wealth were to be despised, and that honour was due alone to good birth; but, at the same time, she had had it strongly borne in upon her that the well-born were somehow or other to be made rich, and that in their achievement of riches lay the perfect fitness of things.

Vévette's mere judgment, then, told her that Raoul was probably suffering some grievous pecuniary embarrassment; but something beyond her judgment, higher than it, told her it was a peril of a graver kind that threatened him. She half determined to consult the Curé, but hesitated for many reasons, one of which was, that Monsieur le Curé himself was just then not so accessible as usual, but seemed to be almost out of temper, and to hold converse unwillingly with those who sought him. On the other hand, Raoul came but seldom to the Château, declaring that his father took up his whole time; and when he did come, Vévette's stolen glances at him were met by looks so mournful in their lovingness, that misery and dread entered deeper and deeper into the poor child's heart. What could be impending?

The Curé had remarked that for many weeks the Breton woodcutter had neglected attending mass, and though it was not his custom either to note down those who remained away from church, or to think less well of them because they did so, still, the peculiar character of Prosper Morel, and his strong superstitious tendencies, made it strange that he should thus absent himself for a continued length of time from all celebration of divine worship.

One morning in April Monsieur le Curé sallied forth after early mass, and took a turn through the market-place. It was market-day, and all the housekeepers of the town and its environs were busy haggling and clamouring over their bargains. Madame Jean was busier and more authoritative than any one else, for she had the countenance of military authority wherever she went, and woe betide any luckless

peasant woman who might attempt to gain, no matter how little, upon the weight of what she sold, or prevaricate upon the freshness of eggs, butter, or poultry. She would have had to settle accounts with the Brigadier, who, on market days, was almost always to be seen in the near neighbourhood of Madame Jean, lending her an importance which neither she nor those about her disdained. But the sword yields precedence to the Church, and "Monsieur Frédéri" fell back respectfully when he saw Monsieur le Curé approaching Madame Jean.

"I wish you would tell me what you know of old Prosper Morel," were the first words addressed by the parish priest to Richard Prévost's housekeeper. "As far as I have remarked, he has been more than two months without coming to church; for him that is odd."

Madame Jean looked the Curé full in the face. "Two months!" echoed she; "why, saving your reverence, I don't believe he's put his foot there for—for—let me see," and she counted on her fingers, "one, two, three, four, five—yes, five," and then she mumbled, "March, February, January, December, November—five full months I don't believe, Monsieur le Curé, that old Prosper has ever been inside the church since the day of the Feast for the Dead."

"Impossible!" retorted the Curé. "I'm quite certain I've seen him since then."

"So you may, but not in church. Seen him! Oh yes, so have I, too;—but how? Hulking and skulking about, crawling along close to the walls, and never speaking to mortal creature, but making off, if you see him, like an owl with the daylight let in upon him!"

"But Prosper is a good Christian," urged the Curé. "He never would stay away from church in that way."

Madame Jean turned up her nose, and sniffed the air with a look of something like indignation.

"Church, indeed!" she exclaimed. "Why, Monsieur le Curé, if one is to believe all one hears, the old savage—those Bretons are no better—has been and built himself some sort of a church or chapel of his own, where he keeps up a psalm-singing and a howling day and night, just as if he were a heretic, neither more nor less."

"Have you spoken to Monsieur Richard about him?" inquired the Curé very calmly, and in no wise allowing himself to be prejudiced.

"Well now, really, Monsieur le Curé," retorted Madame Jean, "where would be the good of speaking to Monsieur Richard? Pray, he's always for showing every indulgence towards old Prosper, under pretence that he was nursed by Prosper's wife; and, accordingly, he don't get stronger or better able to bear worry than he used to be. He's very weak indeed, is Monsieur Richard, and nobody knows the trouble I have with him only to persuade him to eat a little white some soupe grasse, or a white of a chicken, and not to be always stuffing himself with sweets, creams, and jellies, and such-like things that only turn on his stomach and make him sickly, and shivery, and

fractious, just like a baby! And that's what he is, poor Monsieur Richard; for all the world, just like a baby!"

While Madame Jean was delivering herself of this harangue, the Curé had been apparently communing with himself rather earnestly. With one hand shoved into the pocket of his soutane, he employed the other in shifting his black calotte about upon his big head, now bringing it down to his very nose, and then shoving it back to the nape of his neck. Then he suddenly fished up a blue checked cotton handkerchief from the depths of his pocket, blew his nose vigorously, put the kerchief back, rammed both hands into his pockets, said, "Bon jour, Madame Jean" rather abruptly, and marched off, across the Place, to the side street which led him up to his own dwelling.

A quarter of an hour later, Monsieur le Curé might be seen, with his broad-brimmed hat upon his head, and a good strong stick in his hand, walking over the stones to the spot where they cease at the entrance into the town of D——. The day was bright and warm, soft and sunny, and though it was only the first week in April, there was green everywhere,—that beautiful, delicate green through which the sun shines so pleasantly, and which is so suggestive of youth,—the youth of the year. When Monsieur le Curé got upon the high road, he suddenly turned to the left, and struck into the little path that led up the bank, and passed, as we have already been told, through Richard Prévost's woods. He walked on up the hill till at the top he reached a flat part of the country, divided between cornfields and woods; and skirting a field where the young wheat was just beginning to throw its verdant robe over the brown earth, he plunged completely into the shade of the woods, and made for the plantations of tall timber.

In the middle of a clearing, which our pedestrian soon reached, ten long and tolerably straight alleys met, and a board nailed to the stem of a beech-tree informed you that this was called "L'Etoile des dix routes." Between two of these forest avenues, and backed by thick towering woods, in which the axe had not been busy for some years, stood a solid, well-enough built woodman's hut. The door was well-hinged, and the window-panes unbroken. All looked to be in fairly good order. This was Prosper Morel's abode, and Monsieur le Curé went straight up to the door, knocked at it, and got no answer. He tried to open it. It was locked. He examined the two windows. The board serving as a shutter was up at both. Monsieur le Curé walked round and round, and called Prosper with a loud voice, but got no answer. All was still, and as Monsieur le Curé had had a good stout walk, and had left home before the hour at which he usually partook of his second breakfast, he felt hungry, and not undesirous of a little repose. He seated himself on the log of a felled tree, and took from his pocket a large slice of bread, a piece of cheese, and a book. When he had eaten the bread and cheese, he betook

himself to the book, and read, and rested himself for half an hour. At last he rose, and looked again on all sides, and called, but still no one came; and so Monsieur le Curé got up to go home, saying to himself, "I can make out nothing that looks like a chapel." He proceeded home leisurely and musingly, and every now and then stopping to take off his hat, and rub his hand over his forehead.

He had got more than half way upon his journey back to D——, when he heard what he supposed to be the call of one woodsman to another, or of a shepherd to his dog. He stopped and listened. It was very indistinct; but still he heard it again. It seemed to be a good way off, and to come from the part where the woods were thickest. At last he clearly made out that the direction he was taking led him nearer to the sound, and he pursued his path, listening, stopping, and then instinctively holding his breath, in order to listen better. The sound was an inexplicable one—something between a moan and a yell; and as the Curé got nearer, he perceived that it was, in fact, a succession of continuous sounds, and that when the louder cries ceased, they were exchanged for a rapid droning sort of utterance, which at first he could not rightly understand. The wood grew very thick as he advanced, and the path very narrow, winding through tangled brushwood and briars, and extremely damp under foot.

For a moment or two the sounds had ceased, but the Curé kept on his path cautiously, for fear of being heard. Through a break in the bushes he now saw a small open space where the grass grew high, and at one end of which had been raised a species of shed. It was a queer, rude kind of construction, thatched with straw, quite open as far as one half of it went, and the other half was rudely and imperfectly closed by very clumsily made hurdles. The Curé had hardly had time to render to himself an account of what he saw, when the chaunting recommenced.

It was the Litanies for the dead. The droned or muttered parts were the repeated appeals of the actual Litany, whilst the words "Libera me!" were shouted out with terror-stricken force, and with what was really sometimes a perfect yell.

At first the Curé could not see the man who chaunted the dismal invocation, for he was seemingly behind the shed, but a few seconds brought him to view. It was old Prosper Morel, who, with a crozier in his hands, strode round and round the shed, at a solemn measured pace, and as though following the procession before Mass on All Souls' Day. The wood-cutter was so altered that he looked as though twenty years had passed over him. The flesh had apparently dried up, and only wrinkled skin covered the bony structure of the man. The joints seemed absolutely monstrous, and knees, ankles, shoulders, elbows, and wrists stood out in huge disproportion to the shrunk and dwindled portions of the frame they held together. The nose was a

very vulture's beak, rising between the two sharp protruding cheek-bones that literally overhung the hollow cavities where the cheeks had sunk in. But what struck you more than all were the eyes. Naturally enlarged by the shrinking of the flesh from the other features, their balls seemed starting from their sockets. But it was less the glare of the eyes that arrested your attention than their fixity. They appeared invariably to stare at some one object, and the lids did not look as though they could ever close over the eyes themselves.

What with his emaciation, and the patched and tattered condition of his raiment, Prosper was a grim object as he went stalking round and round, staring through space, with his crucifix clutched with both hands, close to his breast, and chaunting the Litanies for the dead.

The Curé resolved to watch minutely the movements of the man, and his whereabouts, before coming forward to make himself known. Accordingly, therefore, as the Breton went to this side or that, he, too, shifted his hiding-place, going from behind one large tree to another. What he saw was this;—there, where the shed was open, there was visible inside it, and at the back, under the slope of the roof, a sort of chapel. Several large logs of wood piled up together, and covered with a sheet, made a kind of altar, and on this were grouped specimens of most of the things used in connection with the ceremonies of the Church. There were images of every description, large and small, in wood and in wax; images of the Virgin and of our Saviour, and of various Saints. There were candlesticks of copper, brass, and tin, with tapers in them; and hung all round there were pictures of Holy Families or Martyrs, such as you buy from pedlars and hawkers for a few sous.

The back of the shed was formed by a flat blank wall of planks coarsely nailed together and painted black, on which were drawn in white chalk a most confusing mass of hieroglyphical signs and figures, disjointed words, huge capital letters, verses of Psalms, and uncouth portraitures of human beings.

While the Curé was busy trying to make out what these extraordinary drawings could mean, the chaunting ceased, and in a few minutes the bûcheron came round with heavy, drawling steps, without his crucifix, but with someting in his hand which the Curé could not distinguish. His eyes were still fixed on vacancy, and he was muttering a prayer half aloud. He walked straight up to the blackened wall, rubbed out a string of words and figures with his sleeve, and with what he held in his right hand began to write down others in their place. The operation was a slow one, but by degrees, as the Curé watched, he saw grow under the old man's fingers the phrase—

"De profundis clamavi . . . . ."

Just then rang out clearly in the distance the chimes of the church

of D——, and the twelve strokes marking the hour of noon. This proved to Monsieur le Curé that he was nearer to the town than he had at first supposed.

He determined now to try the effect of personal communication, and stepping forward from behind the cover of his tree, he addressed the man. "Prosper Morel," said he, coming straight up to the bûcheron, "what is it you are doing here?" The old man sprang back with an agility you could not have imagined to belong to him, and then suddenly, as it were, collapsed altogether, and fell down at the root of a tall sycamore, huddled up, and with only his two arms stretched out to their utmost length, as though to ward off some attack. "Prosper," repeated the Curé, coming closer, but speaking very gently, "I have not come to harm you. Tell me why you are here?"

But, seemingly, speech was impossible, for the woodcutter only writhed and gibbered, and stretched out his hands against the intruder more and more. At last, by a violent effort, he raised himself against the trunk of the tree, and stood upright, glowering at the Curé, whose quiet persistence nevertheless appeared to be acting magnetically upon him.

After a few minutes' struggling, speech, though imperfect, came; and then, with a scream of terror, he spoke. "Master! master!" shrieked Prosper, "I won't go alone with you! Take him too;—take him!"

"Do you not know me, Prosper Morel?" asked the Curé, as he thought he perceived some sign of wavering in the man's eye.

"Yes! yes!" he gasped in agony, clasping his hands with convulsive energy. "Know you? yes. It is you who told him to come for me,—told me he would come, and look at me face to face,—but I won't go;"—and he threw his arms behind him fiercely, round the trunk of the tree;—"I won't go alone with him. Tell him to take the other too,—the other,—the other! Tell him to take him!" And then his hold relaxed, his knees knocked together, his body bent forwards, and he dropped senseless to the ground.

* * * * *

When Monsieur le Curé reached his home that afternoon he was no wiser than he had been when he left it. He felt that there was "something wrong" somewhere; but what seemed to him the most evident result of the whole was that, with his sermon on All Souls' Day, he had completely deranged the old woodcutter's already weak intellect.

But was Prosper only mad? or . . . .?

It was a terrible question, and Monsieur le Curé was sorely perplexed.

WHOM SHALL WE MAKE LEADER OF THE NEW HOUSE OF COMMONS?

We place the question above asked at the head of this paper, thinking it to be more important than that other question—Who shall be the Prime Minister when the new House of Commons shall have met, and shall have shown its tendencies, its sympathies, and its intentions?

Since Lord Melbourne resigned in 1841, now something more than twenty-six years ago, the First Lord of the Treasury has, we believe, been a member of the Upper House of Parliament for about seven years, while a member of the Lower House has reigned for about nineteen years. And during those seven years in which the first servant of the Crown was a peer, it was generally felt throughout the country that the peer who held the office of Prime Minister was, in truth, the chief of his Cabinet hardly more than in name. In Lord Aberdeen's administration Lord John Russell, Lord Palmerston, and Mr. Gladstone, all sitting in the House of Commons, were the public servants whom the public most regarded. In each of Lord Derby's three Governments, he himself has been overshadowed by his Chancellor of the Exchequer; and when Lord John Russell,—than whom no Prime Minister had been more thoroughly Prime Minister when with that name he sat in the House of Commons,—became First Lord of the Treasury as Earl Russell in the House of Lords, Mr. Gladstone,—as we are sure Lord Russell would himself admit,—was recognised as the leading exponent of the political views of his party. That this has been so during the period named there can be no doubt; and looking at the tendencies which the forms of Government are taking in the country, it is, we think, clear that the same result must follow from any future combination of ministerial names. It may well be for the comfort of the Queen that she should entrust the formation of a ministry, in the interest either of the liberal or of the conservative party, to a member of the House of Peers. It may well be for the benefit of the country that, in this or in that emergency, the First Lord of the Treasury should sit in the Upper rather than in the Lower House. But let the so-named Prime Minister sit where he may, let titles and precedence in any ministry be arranged as the Crown and the ministers themselves may choose, the people of the country have now been taught to regard the Leader of the

House of Commons as the highest political personage of the day, and will so continue to regard him, until the present phase of parliamentary government shall have been altered by new ideas. For this reason it is more important to us to ask who will be the Leader of the new House of Commons when that House shall have met, than to inquire who may occupy the President's chair in future Downing Street assemblies.

And it is very important that the question should be asked now,—and that it should be answered now by those men who will have potential voices in placing this or that man in the foremost seat on the Treasury Bench, when the new House shall have been called together. Who will be the Leader for this present session of Parliament is a fact pretty well established. We do not attempt to prophesy whether Lord Derby and Mr. Disraeli may hold their places till the autumn; but even should the circumstances of party warfare lead to their overthrow before the session be over, and should a liberal Minister be called upon to form a Government with the present House of Commons,—an event which few Liberals anticipate or even desire to witness,—the new initiation of a liberal policy by liberal political members of the House could hardly be accomplished till a House of Commons shall have been brought together which shall represent the new as well as the old constituents. Mr. Disraeli will of course lead the House now sitting, and we shall not regret to see him leading it till it die. But it is for the liberal party who now fill the left benches, to settle in this session, and to settle firmly, whom during the next session that party shall obey, should the Treasury Bench then be occupied by its representatives. The question is one which cannot be answered with advantage, which cannot even be asked without injury, when the services of the Leader are required for instant action. President Lincoln is reported to have said, when the dismissal of an unpopular Minister was demanded of him amidst the hottest turmoil of the Civil War, that it was bad to have to change one's horse in the middle of a rapid river. The position in which the liberal party would find itself, should its trust in its chief spokesman be unsettled, is not exactly that suggested by President Lincoln's illustration. When the hour of battle shall have come, there will be no suggestion to change the leader. There will be no direct proposal made to put down this man and to put up that. But there may arise, as heretofore there have arisen, political ideas in men's minds, untrue to policy, though honest enough in themselves, which will create on the one side lack of faith, and a propensity to disobedience, where submission and co-operation are a necessity; and on the other side, a stern refusal to conciliate where conciliation is a duty. When this occurs at the moment of action, the effect is the same as that of changing your horse in the mid-torrent. You are swept down while the little difficulty is being

overcome, and the strength of the man and of the steed, which would have been all-sufficient, are wasted in doing that which should never have been wanted to be done at such a moment,—and, even though wanted, should not have been attempted.

There are such difficulties before us;—or there may be. Let so much be conceded. That a great party should be brought together to act on various subjects,—on each of which every bettermost man of that party has a distinct opinion of his own,—to act on matters of the highest moment to the welfare of their country, and each with all the responsibility of self-action, and that there should be no divergence of ideas, no difference of opinion,—either as to the things which should be done, or as to the manner of doing them, is a supposition that no politician can entertain. And we all know that there are and always will be men in the House who proudly call themselves independents. Here and there is to be seen among the benches the "Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri;" who proclaims that he will follow no leaders, that he will support or oppose this measure or that, simply as his own theories or instincts in matters political may dictate to him to do. That there should be some such men in the House is very good, and a few such men have been useful in their way. But we all know that nothing in politics can be carried by such men. Catholic emancipation, Reform, Repeal of the Corn Laws and Free Trade generally have not come from their endeavours. It is admitted that the practical man in the House of Commons must belong to a party. We have had no truly great or eminently useful man in the House, since the House has had an intelligible history, who has refused to submit himself to party bonds. It would be as well for a soldier or a regiment to propose to go out into the field during the battle, and to do a little fighting apart, still meaning that the fighting should be done for the national cause, as for a politician to suppose that he can carry his measure without concession to the views of others,—without fighting, that is, in his own cause, indeed, but in compliance with the tactics and strategy of the army by which the victory is to be won.

But there are difficulties. That the political servants of the Crown should obey their leaders is a thing of course. These are gentlemen who have so closely understood each other's ideas in politics, who have been so trained one by another, that without strain upon their feelings, they are able to act together as a compact body. Now and again, we hear of disruptions, but of disruptions only sufficient to prove as exceptions the truth of the rule. But the outer party is bound together by no tie which makes disruption the necessary consequence of disobedience. The ordinary member owes his closest allegiance to his constituents. It must therefore be with him a matter of judgment whether he will or will not act with his party on any subject. No doubt there are difficulties. How shall you

argue with a man that he is bound in conscience to give up the crotchet to which he finds that his conscience directs him? You can only convince him by teaching him that he can be of no use for effecting the great purposes which he has in view as a single stick, and that he can only be strong as one of a faggot.

"Fas est et ab hoste doceri." Let us learn what may be done in party warfare from the Conservatives and from their leaders. When the Tory Gentlemen of England, our staunch old squires, have been taught such a lesson in party warfare as that which, on the authority of their great instructor himself, we are assured they have at length learned, surely we on the liberal side in politics need have no difficulty in submitting ourselves to our masters. There need be no ferule for us, and the yoke should be very easy. If a great party, in the cause of political warfare, can be led together to accomplish that which, as all men know, each individual of the party regarded as a thing abominable, antagonistic to his own instincts, odious to his own feelings, subversive of his own modes of thinking and of living, surely there should be no great obstacle, no invincible difficulty, in bringing the opposing party together for purposes which are dear to each individual, which are in accordance with his instincts, which suit his feelings, and which satisfy his modes of thought and of life? There may be a contest as to this or that word in a political proposition. One Liberal may differ from another as to time, or extent, in proposing a measure,—or even as to the manner of carrying it. But the liberal party may be consolidated without the learning of any lessons painful as those which have lately been administered; without swallowing any medicine bitter as that with which Mr. Disraeli has been compelled to purge the flock of which he is the shepherd.

The Conservatives have at least effected much,—so much, with so little of disruption, as to have sufficed for their purpose,—and they have done so because they were prepared with their leader. Whatever merits they have lacked, the merit of obedience has been theirs; and the history of the last session, and of the one preceding it, should teach us these two lessons;—that the best political party can do nothing unless there be unison between it and its leader, and that the worst political party may do almost anything if that unison exist. When we see the remnant of the fifty and odd country gentlemen, who bound themselves together in hopeless antagonism to the first advance of Free Trade, voting submissively for Household Suffrage, we should acknowledge ourselves ready to accept a lesson in political warfare from Mr. Disraeli and his followers. And then it is so pleasant to know that we may accept the lesson and suffer none of the humiliation. But the lesson must be accepted;—we must choose our leader now; we must prove that we are ready to follow him,—with so much of submission as a political leader has a right to demand,—if we intend that our party shall sit on the dominant

side of the House soon after the new Parliament shall have been assembled.

Our question, "Whom shall we make Leader of the new House of Commons?" refers to men and not to measures, and we are aware that measures and not men are supposed to be the objects of all honest politicians. What matters who is in Downing Street, or who sits on the Treasury Bench near the big box in the House of Commons, so long as the country gets the legislation that it wants, and has that legislation executed efficiently? Measures and not men are, no doubt, what we are all struggling to put forward. This of course is true;—but men are the means to measures, and to political measures they are the only means within the compass of the ordinary citizen's reach. And if this be true, it must be true also that nothing in politics can be effected under a free government without party submission and party fidelity. This is now acknowledged as a truth, as far as practice may be taken as an acknowledgment, in the government of every great existing kingdom in the earth, in the formation of which there is any attempt or pretence of attempt at constitutional form. In the United States, the great political battle of each term of four years is the election for the Presidency. It may be, latterly it generally has been the case, that the popular candidate has been a man comparatively unknown; but the candidature of that man has meant protection of slavery with increase of slave and state rights, or it has meant abolition of slavery, free soil states, and Federal power. The questions are now a little altered; but the manner and the intention is in nowise changed. By his vote and by his vote only can the democrat show himself to be a democrat, and assist in carrying democratic measures; or can the republican show himself as he is, and give his aid to republican views of government. It is the same in France. The man who prefers imperial rule votes for the Emperor's candidate. He who would prefer a more liberal form of government, if he be bold enough, gives his vote to the opposition. There is nothing else that he can do. Of course he wants measures, not men. But men are the means to measures,—and are as well known for the direction which they will take as are different trains on a railway. One does not find oneself carried to Manchester, if one gets into a carriage for Liverpool. The member of the House of Commons who chooses to support Mr. Disraeli, may indeed not quite know whither he may be taken ultimately, but he may be sure that he will be carried along on the good old conservative road, in good old conservative company.

As we hold it to be the duty of every Liberal in the country who possesses a vote, to give that vote to the liberal candidates who may contest the seat in which he is interested,—even though personal feelings should prompt another course,—so do we think that every liberal member in the House of Commons should, on all great party

questions, place his vote at the disposal of his leader. If that be the case, there can be no matter of greater import than the selection of a leader who is to be so trusted. And we think that the very foremost business of the House of Commons is to place the proper man on the first seat on the Treasury Bench,—a man who shall have the gifts of a statesman as well as those of a debater, and who, above all things, shall be in sympathy with the majority of his countrymen. The battle cannot be fought without a general, let the soldiers be ever so honest and ever so brave. Nor can a battle ever be won under a command divided among two or more. If it be hoped that liberal measures shall be carried by a liberal majority in the next House of Commons,—measures for the extension of education, suppression of the Irish Church, for the abolition of religious disqualification, and the like,—it must be decided, and decided plainly during the present session, who shall be the leader under whom the liberal party shall elect to win its victories.

That the passing of liberal measures into law should come from a preponderance of liberal members in the House of Commons would seem to be a truism so flat that it needs to be re-stated by no political writer. But the boasts which have been made by the conservative party, as to the carriage by them of one great reform after another,—and each in opposition to their own acknowledged modes of thinking,—make it necessary that the truth should be asserted over and over again, even though it be so clear when stated as to seem to require no asseveration. Nothing of liberal legislation can be or has been effected for the country but by strength on the liberal side of the House of Commons. The Tories conceded Catholic emancipation; but was Catholic emancipation due to the concession of the Duke of Wellington, or to the demand of Mr. O'Connell? The Tories, with so much of the cream skimmed off from their milk,—with a secession of fifty and odd of the staunchest members of their party,—carried the first great measure of Free Trade; but to whom do we owe the repeal of the Corn Laws;—to Sir Robert Peel, or to Mr. Cobden and the League? The Tories have produced for us household suffrage,—with another skimming, of but little cream, with their fifty and odd staunch men reduced to three; but from whence has that boon truly come to us; from the enthusiasm in the cause of Mr. Disraeli, or from the convictions of such men as Mr. Locke King, Mr. Baines, Mr. Bright, Lord Russell, and Mr. Gladstone? It is necessary that every liberal who desires to understand the history of the government of his country, and to know how things are done, how public opinion prevails, how legislation proceeds ever in the same course, doing something, though it be but little, for the improvement of the condition of the people,—it is necessary, we say, that every one interested in the politics of the day, should ask for himself and should answer for himself these questions. If this be

done, those boasts which the conservative leaders are prone to make will be understood and appreciated, and taken at their worth. We were told lately at Edinburgh, by Mr. Disraeli, that almost all legislation in the cause of liberalism had for years long past come from him or from his flock. He did not tell us then how bitter had been his own opposition to that great conservative leader of the House from whose wise concession to public opinion the first step of free trade in bread was made at the moment when it was most absolutely needed,—an opposition in which there was a venom to which our political contests, bitter as they often are, have for many years past seen nothing equal. Though he did not tell us this, he took to himself, and to the party whom he has educated, the credit for all those good things which have come to us since we first reformed our House of Commons, including those measures of Sir Robert Peel's which produced from him such torrents of sarcasm. This boast was well answered the other day by Mr. Gladstone at Ormskirk; but it cannot be too often pointed out that whether liberal measures are passed under a conservative or under a liberal leader of the House of Commons, such measures will never be passed, or even heard of, but by the operation of that liberal party in the House which is the mouthpiece of the public opinion of the country.

The ordinary tactics of our party warfare make it natural that much of our legislation in favour of the liberal cause should come to us at last from the hands of conservative statesmen. Our system of representation is so devised,—is still so devised, though two Reform Bills have been at work upon it,—that the popular expression of political feeling in the country cannot do more than carry a bare majority of members into the House of Commons. The fact that boroughs, such as Calne and Wilton, are still called upon to furnish a third of the number of members returned by the Manchesters and Liverpools,—that is, we may say roundly, that 3,000 persons in a small town are politically equal to 100,000 in a large town, with a similar arrangement in reference to such counties as Rutland and Westmoreland, as compared with the different divisions of Yorkshire and Lancashire,—this fact will still produce the nearly even balance of political power of which we speak. And we should be sorry to see this balance roughly destroyed. That there should be a majority of liberal members in the House is to be ardently desired,—and as ardently is it to be desired that every fair step should be taken to extract liberal members from constituencies which have not hitherto been so generous and beneficent. But as the balance, always showing a turn in favour of the liberal party, has never hitherto tilted their opponents into the air, the battle has still been carried on with something of a chance of victory for the conservatives. If victory as to measures could not be obtained, personal ascendancy might be won. Catholic emancipation, Free Trade, and Reform,

though absolutely antagonistic to the very essence of Toryism and odious to the Tory soul, might be caused by Tory partisans. And, then, they could so much easier be carried by Tories than by Liberals, in any House of Commons that was nearly balanced. A liberal leader of the House, proposing Reform, would surely have against him every member of the Tory party. Without a blush, without a question to his feelings, without a qualm of conscience, the Conservative could oppose any measure of Reform introduced by a Liberal to the House. Let there only be some small gathering of fractious, undisciplined, self-opiniated men on the liberal side, to help the opposition, and the battle is won! Then there takes place the usual change. The gentlemen from the left of the Speaker go in triumph to the right; and the gentlemen from the right walk down to the left. But the gentlemen so placed on the right can only remain on the right by adopting the policy of their opponents. There may be battles in the House; but no one dreams of fighting against public opinion. The cause becomes triumphant in the hands of a Conservative, because the Liberal cannot vote against it, without a qualm of conscience, without a question to his feelings, or without a blush.

And so the country gains its measure. That which is desired to be law becomes law. There are many who will say that this should be sufficient, and that as long as this can be done no good citizen need trouble himself about the occupants of the Treasury Bench. If we are sure of the legislation that we want, what matters it from whence it comes? If this be so, may we not then at any rate say, that measures will suffice, irrespective of men? We hold, however, that nothing will so curtail, so retard, so deaden the progress of liberal legislation as such a conviction in men's mind as this. One may get oneself drawn up a hill by an idle horse,—even by a jibbing horse after much delay; but one would prefer to face the ascent with a spirited steed, willing for the work, and anxious to be at the top as we are anxious ourselves. It is true that we get liberal legislation from statesmen who are adverse to everything liberal in politics. Public opinion is good for so much;—public opinion, joined to that natural love for a share of political power, pay, and patronage which warms the bosom of every public politician. But we get it slowly, in driblets, without a heart, and with suspicion in our minds when we are taking it. We fear the gifts that come from Greeks. Even now, does not almost every Reformer think that Mr. Disraeli will be found to have been too many for him, and that there has been something so ingenious in the manipulation of household suffrage, that votes will be forthcoming from it, which will send us back for a quarter of a century into the darkness of patriarchal politics? We confess that we do not ourselves share these fears. We think that we have really extracted much of that which we desire, even from a Parliament governed by Mr. Disraeli.

But Reform from the Conservatives is neither so sweet nor so safe to us, as it would have been from the hands of our own old tried and well-loved friends.

And even if we get the thing surely, we get it very slowly. A session of liberal progress under conservative leaders can be the result only of many sessions under liberal leaders. Is there any one who believes that Lord Derby's Government would have given us Reform, had not the absolute necessity of such a surrender on Lord Derby's part been forced upon him by the known determination of a majority in the House of Commons? The truth in that matter is so notorious that any speculation on it would be idle, were it not so necessary to keep ever present in our minds the way in which these things are done. And if we are to have liberal legislation from Tory statesmen, in their own teeth as it were,—if we are to have it from that source because we can get it thus, and only thus,—it follows that even for this purpose we must have our ranks well serried and well led, or else the compelling power will be wanting. If three,—shall we say three?—sessions of liberal ascendancy in the House be needed, to obtain one session of surrender from the hands of ascendant Tories, let us at least secure those three sessions that are so vital to us. And surely all true Liberals would wish to go beyond this. It is not well to be a honey-making bee in order that drones may reap the credit of one's industry. Better, even so, be the bee than the drone; but one would prefer to have one's title acknowledged. We are bound to confess that the late failure, nay the frequent failure of liberal bees to obtain their just recompense has come from mutiny in the hive. There has not been enough of sympathy between the Queen bee and her army.

If then it be desirable that in our new House of Commons the liberal party shall be enabled to carry liberal measures from the dominant side of the Speaker's chair, it is essential that, when the moment comes, the liberal party shall be ready with its Leader. And who shall that Leader be? We need, at any rate, not feel any squeamishness in declaring that it will not be Mr. Disraeli;—and we hardly need feel more in declaring that the only possible present leader of such a party is Mr. Gladstone. A leader without faults,—faults in the eyes of some,—it is impossible to conceive. That Mr. Gladstone may have faults,—faults which are faults in the eyes of the best of his own party,—we may acknowledge. But he has virtues, which we can all trust,—truth, honesty, genius, knowledge, a ready tongue, patriotism, and self-reliance.

We think we shall be held to be right if we limit the present number of possible leaders of the House of Commons to five. Mr. Disraeli is a possible leader;—but of him as such we need only say that he is certainly not the general by whom the liberal party desires to be led. Lord Stanley is a possible leader;—and were it probable

that his father should retire altogether from politics, it is not unlikely that Lord Stanley should bid for the leadership of the Liberals in the House of Commons. We are compelled to admire the position which Lord Stanley has taken in politics. The combination which he has shown of fidelity to his father, to his country, and to his own political character, have proved him to be a steadfast man,—and he has, moreover, been a good public servant. But we should much lament to see the liberal party in his hands. He has not borne the brunt of the fight;—and, were it for nothing else, the undoubted fact that they who have borne the heat of the action could not endure to be so topped, would make us fear to see such rivalry. But at present there can be no question of such rivalry. We trust that the election of another man may be made sure before Lord Stanley's chance of competing for the position may occur. And then Lord Cranbourne is a possible leader of the House. Should he remain where he is,—that is, should he not have been called to the House of Lords,—by the time that the Tory party shall have rehabitated itself, he would, we may almost say undoubtedly, become its leader. And there are few who would not be rejoiced to see so honest, so diligent, and so capable a statesman as is Lord Cranbourne in that position. For the very success of a liberal party, a conservative party is needed. And that the conservative party should have its innings, now and again,—so that they be not too much prolonged,—no Liberal feels to be a sorrow. Should it become Lord Cranbourne's destiny to sit opposite to the official box, we shall not grudge him that honour; but when we are looking for a leader for ourselves, Lord Cranbourne cannot be the man. The fourth in our short list is Mr. Bright. When we venture to make such a list it is impossible to omit the name of Mr. Bright, though there are probably but few politicians who think it probable that he should ever be the first servant of the Crown, and though,—as far as we can judge,—he himself would not be found among those few. Nevertheless his position in the House and in the country has been so marked, he is so manifestly a leading man in politics, his power as an orator and as a debater is so great, that we should not be justified in denying that he might aspire to lead the House of Commons as the Queen's Minister, without arrogance or undue ambition. As we think that he would fail, and as we would regret much to see his failure, we will, at any rate, hope that the attempt may not be made. There remains to us Mr. Gladstone.

We have named in the above list three whom we regard as Liberals: and perhaps we may venture, before we proceed to urge further Mr. Gladstone's claim, to explain in a very few words what we conceive to be the difference between a liberal and a conservative politician. We are very far from conceiving that all conservative politicians are more desirous of fattening themselves on the blood of the innocent. We believe them, as a rule, to be as truly patriotic in their desires,—a

truly, according to their lights, as are the Liberals. We may feel hot anger, now and again, in regard to some special Tory,—not on account of his Toryism, but because he is so urgent in his attempts to make us believe that he is not a Tory. Taking them as a party, however, we admit that each individual member of it is probably as honest and as patriotic as are the individual members of the party opposite. But we regard the difference between them as being as clearly marked as is that in colour between a black man and a white man. The two regard the whole human race from a different point of view, and approach all questions of the government of men with theories of governing totally at variance. It is the object of Tories to maintain the inequalities between various ranks of men, as though such inequality was in itself a thing good. It is the object of Liberals to lessen these inequalities, believing such inequality to be in itself a thing bad. We are aware that the danger of making such a statement is this,—that it enables an opponent to accuse us of advocating that theory of an immediate proclaimed Equality in which French republicans used to rejoice. We declare that we are as far from doing so as can be any staunchest stickler for old rights. But at the same time we venture to think that the ultimate use of all legislation should be to help those below to come up somewhat nearer to those who are above them. The politics of the Tory are patriarchal. To him it appears to be almost an ordinance of God that society should be composed of a squire in a big house, with a parson below him, with four farmers in a parish, and with a proportion of peasantry living in cottages. This being the order of things which he finds, the Tory thinks that it is perfect. He is hospitable to the parson, just and affable to the farmers, and benevolent to the peasants. But to him, and to those who put faith in him, it appears that this is an order of things so good that it should remain, with its relative distances and differences, as an institution for ever. To him the superiority of his squiredom is a thing as sacred, as surely true and begotten of God, as was the divine right of the throne to the former kings of England. In that belief we find the patriarchal, or Tory, scheme of politics. The theory of the Liberal is the reverse of this, is anti-patriarchal, or what we may perhaps best call constitutional. Let the squire keep his acres, and the parson his living, and the farmer his farm; let the merchant keep his counting-house, and the manufacturer his mill; but let all legislation go to reduce the existing inequalities between man and man;—let the man below be assisted to tread on the heels of the man above him, rather than deterred from doing so;—that thus by degrees there may be none who cannot read, none who cannot learn what it is to be civilised. The Tory would always wish to be bountiful to those below him; whereas the Liberal would fain give nothing in bounty, but would enable him who wants to earn all in justice.

We have said that there are three possible politicians in the House of Commons who might be elected to lead a liberal party, entertaining generally views such as those which we have attempted to describe; and we have shown why we think that two of them are, at any rate for the present, out of the question. There remains to us Mr. Gladstone, and it becomes the duty of the party to inquire,—and it is indeed the duty of every individual member of the party who has the privilege of a seat in the House,—whether he be fit to be trusted with the great power needed for the position.

Has Mr. Gladstone shown himself to be true in politics,—true to his party and true to his country? Has he been honest? Is he an efficient statesman? Is he generally capable? Can he command the attention of the House? Has he won the respect of men;—for in this there is very much? And can he conciliate men;—for in this there is much also?

As regards Mr. Gladstone's sincerity in politics, we think that no man on any side entertains a doubt of it. The very changes which he has made are the proof of his sincerity. As he has continued to study the great matter of the governing of a country, he has gone round what we may perhaps call a quarter of the circle, advancing,—or retrograding, if there be any who choose to say so,—from liberal conservatism, to conservative liberalism. Year by year, and almost month by month, his countrymen have watched these changes as they have been made; and there has been not even an enemy who has ventured to think that aught but the convictions of a studious and just mind have produced them. We can all admire, after a fashion, the steadfast consistency of the politician who in early youth assumes a side which then is probably dictated to him by circumstances, who adheres always to the political ideas which were then instilled into him, and who dies by them. But such a one has not often the opportunity of giving proof of much earnest thought on the matter. His sincerity is not passed through the fire, as is that of the man who by slow degrees, with the eyes of his countrymen upon him, teaches himself those political lessons which he finds it necessary that he should learn in the service of his country. Of Mr. Gladstone's truth to his party and to his country we do not think that any liberal, or any conservative, member of the House of Commons, will have a doubt. And then as to his honesty? A politician may be true to his party, true after a fashion to his country,—and yet not be honest. Examples very conspicuous might be given of such lack of honesty joined to patriotism and to party zeal; but it would be invidious and unnecessary here to name such a one. They who do evil in politics that good may come of it, who mislead by false answers, who are crafty when skill only is required, who show a half and call it a whole, who descend to the intrigues of politics, and win their way by bamboozling friends, rather than by conquering foes,—such men we

call dishonest politicians. And we feel sure that, from year to year, as the mind of the country becomes clear in the matter, such guile will become less and ever less efficient for its intended purposes. We do not ever remember to have heard accusation of such dishonesty made against Mr. Gladstone. It will, we think, be admitted on all sides, that he has never descended to the wiliness of politics. It is hard, indeed, for a Minister to escape altogether the taint of such fault; and it has come partly perhaps from the nature of the ministerial position which he has held, that he has been able to exempt himself from even suspicion on such a charge. As regards efficiency in statesmanship and general capacity for public business, the liberal party may boast that in Mr. Gladstone it will have a leader as to whom there need be no doubt. That he is a real financier, the various budgets which he has produced for the country, and the recognised soundness of his views as to revenue, bear ample testimony. Now that M. Fould has been lost to France, Europe probably has not his equal. The expression of the opinion of that class of the public whom we call city men, has been on this head so plain as to leave the question among those that have been answered beyond a cavil. We all understand how essential it is that the Minister who leads either party in the House should be able so to address the House as to command its attention. Among the eloquent he should, if possible, be most eloquent; among those of ready tongue, he should have the readiest. He should be gifted with all the amenities of speech;—and the acerbities, the sharpnesses, and severities of speech should also be within his reach. It would be loss of labour to argue on this head respecting one from whose tongue speech flows sweeter than honey, and who can at a moment's notice imbue his words with all the bitterness of gall. In this respect, if fault there be, it is in the redundant fluency of the orator. Ready speech,—speech that shall be rational as well as ready,—which is so difficult to most of us, which is within the reach of hardly two or three among us without a strenuous effort, comes from him so like rills of water from a mountain, that they seem to count for nothing when they should count for much. At any rate we need not fear that speech should fail him, or that they who sit around him should fail to listen. As for that respect of men which should certainly, in these days, belong to him who is to be a leader in politics among us, it is never given in this country with a niggard hand to those among us in whose intellect and general honesty of purpose the country believes. It may be lost by very palpable immorality. It may be sacrificed to egregious covetousness. It may be diminished by buffoonery and a too-ready habit either of jest or of sarcasm. At present there is hardly a leading politician among us whose name and person are not held in high respect in the House to which he belongs. Lord Derby, Lord Russell, Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Bright, Lord Stanley, Lord Cran-

bourne, are thoroughly respected. It is felt to be an honour to know these men, and that feeling is reciprocated from one side of either House to the other. No one will venture to say that, in this respect, Mr. Gladstone holds a position inferior to the highest that is enjoyed by either of the statesmen above-named.

There is one other question which we have ventured to ask of the man who, after all, must be the leader of the liberal party in the new House of Commons, if any purpose, any efficacy, any action is to be expected from it. Can he conciliate men? We, perhaps, should not exaggerate the importance of this question if we were to say that upon the true answer to it depends the success or the non-success of the Government in England for the next ten years. There is one man, endowed with all the gifts which God can give, trained to the very purpose by study and thought as perhaps no other man was ever trained, with the reins in his hand, and every muscle, every finger capacitated by habit to manipulate them without an effort, with the position so completely attained, so honestly and entirely won, that none other can possibly fill it;—and all may be lost, because he cannot assume that urbanity towards his friends, that smiling, meaningless, yet all-powerful courtesy, that tone of equality among party comrades who doubtless are not his equals, which have enabled men inferior to him in all other things to hold a grasp of political power which nothing could shake.

May we imagine that when Atlas bore the world, well knowing that he bore it all, he would have been impatient and have shaken his sides with wrath, had the little mountains round him assumed that they bore a share? Or shall we say that it is the ambition of a noble spirit to desire to do all by its own efforts? It seems to us that Atlas may bear the world, and the noble mind be satisfied, without offence to the little mountains or to the lesser spirits. We believe that in every form of government, let it be devised how it may, there must be one leading mind. In a despotism it must be so,—whether the power belong to the so-called Despot, or be deputed. In a republic under a President it must be so. In a parliamentary government it must be so;—with this advantage in the latter case, that the leading mind can be changed as soon as it ceases to satisfy the governed. We have already said, in the first words of the remarks which we are now venturing to make, that this leading mind, this Leader of politics in England, this Governor-in-Chief of the nation, must henceforth be found sitting in the first place on the Treasury Bench in the House of Commons. The man who is to sit there must, after some sort, be our Atlas. But he cannot sit there long, let his qualities for the place be what they may, unless he can, at any rate, seem to share his burden with the little mountains.

But there are duties on both sides; and we may say of the man who cannot bear something for the sake of his party, that he is a

politician who is not likely to be of much service to his country. It would now be difficult, and it is perhaps unnecessary, to unravel the entangled difficulties which caused the failures of the session of 1866. But whatever may have been the causes of that failure, they gave a triumph to the conservative party which among other evils has produced this greatest evil,—the passing of a Reform Bill that bears the impress of no reformer's mind. We have an act which the collective good sense of the House, working without guidance from any political leader, has saved from the monstrous errors with which it was first projected. But it has been felt already,—and will be felt for ever and told in history, how faulty have been the provisions and how great the omissions of this patchwork piece of legislation,—because it was made law, without the superintendence of any one guiding mind. To call it Mr. Disraeli's bill, would be as idle as to say that it came from Mr. Gladstone. The bill which, despite its faults, is a liberal bill, was passed by the liberal party, but was passed by that party without a leader. The fault in this case was more, we must say, with the party than with him who should have led it. It is useless, however, to look to what is past, except for the lesson that it gives. If this lesson can be read aright, it will be very useful both to those who should be led, and to him who must lead. There is no reason why the country should be indebted to conservative statesmen for the Downing Street and Treasury Bench portion of that liberal legislation which it needs; but it must be so indebted, unless they who compose the liberal side of the House will consent to act in accordance with the statesman whom they shall have agreed to elect as their Leader.

ON SHOOTING.

THE day which introduces these pages to the reader's eye will also drop the curtain upon the English shooting season of 1867—68. From the second day of February until the twelfth day of the following August the feathered game of these islands will regain and enjoy unconscious immunity from those deadly missiles, which the breech-loaders of Purday and his multitudinous professional brethren drive with such accuracy and force through the spangled plumage of grouse, pheasant, and partridge. It seems, therefore, no inappropriate moment to canvass the effects produced by the almost universal abandonment among British sportsmen of guns loaded at the muzzle, and the adoption in their stead of guns loaded at the breech. This substitution of weapons has been, as our sporting readers are well aware, a slow and gradual process. Great and now acknowledged as is the superiority of the breech-loader over the muzzle-loader, it was found to be no easy matter to induce middle-aged and elderly sportsmen among us to abandon in a moment the detonating or percussion system with which the fame of Osbaldeston, Captain Ross, George Anson, Lord Huntingfield, and many other celebrated marksmen, both dead and living, is inseparably identified. No sudden disclosure of the inferiority of their weapon flashed conviction upon the minds of British sportsmen, and taught them, as the battle of Sadowa taught soldiers all over the world, that percussion-caps and muzzle-loaders were no less a thing of the past than flint and steel, or bows and arrows. But even if the merits of the breech-loader had been far more conspicuously manifest and incontrovertible than they are, nothing is more illustrative of the characteristic conservatism of our own upper classes than the tenacity with which they cling to the ancestral fashion of field-sports and country amusements which has been handed down to them from their grandsires. Nothing can now seem more improbable to us than that the percussion gun should have had any difficulty in uprooting and displacing the flint gun. And yet it would be easy to prove, from publications which appeared from forty-five to fifty years ago, that many of the best gunmakers and crack shots of that day continued for years to maintain the superiority of the flint gun over the detonator, and that Colonel Hawker, the most successful and authoritative writer upon guns and shooting that Great Britain has hitherto produced, seems to have retained a sneaking preference for flint and steel up to his dying day.

In connection with our investigation of the effects upon the diver-

fied interests of shooting which are likely to result from the introduction of the breech-loader, we propose briefly to review the general condition and prospects of this popular English pastime. The pursuit and destruction of wild animals, whether feathered and biped, or furry and quadruped, has been in fashion among mankind from the earliest recorded times. But it has been reserved for Englishmen, since the introduction of fire-arms, to apply to a pursuit, which by every other nation, ancient and modern, has always been described under the generic name of "hunting," the narrower and more specific title of "Shooting." When Nimrod is described in the Book of Genesis as "a mighty hunter before the Lord," it is not to be presumed that he was in the habit of mounting his horse and careering across the hills and valleys of the land of Canaan in pursuit of deer, or wild boar, or any other quadruped. What may have been the game, and what the snares, or traps, or pitfalls, or projectiles by which its destruction was compassed in Asia some 2,200 years before the birth of our Lord, we must leave to Dr. William Smith, or to some scriptural "Old Shekarry," to investigate and determine. Again, when Xenophon enters into an elaborate description of hunting as it existed in his day, we must dismiss from our minds, as we read him, all recollection of the restricted signification which the word bears in these islands and among ourselves. The elevation of fox-hunting among us into a favourite and, as some maintain, into our most characteristic national pastime, has deprived English shooters of the right to call themselves hunters. For, when an Englishman announces that he is going out hunting, the words convey no other notion than that he is about to mount his horse and to repair to a meet of some fox-hounds which is to be held in his vicinity. But let an American, in Iowa, or Wisconsin, or Minnesota, announce that he is going out hunting, and the first question addressed to him will be whether he intends to pursue bear or deer, prairie-chicken or wild-fowl.

It has always appeared to us that this divorce between hunting and shooting has been very prejudicial to the true interests of the latter pursuit. No one can deny that the pride which manly and genuine sportsmen feel in their shooting achievements is enhanced in proportion as the game pursued is assimilated in its nature to the class of animals described by lawyers as feræ naturæ. The unlaborious pheasants are dependent for their existence upon artificial supplies of daily food, and the more they are made to approximate to the habits and nature of barn-yard fowls, the more rapidly will all pride and satisfaction in the numbers slaughtered be felt to diminish. The pheasant is, after all, an exotic or foreigner imported from China or Asia Minor to England by a factitious outlay of money, of which still more must be expended to keep him alive. Without carrying our prejudices against pheasant-shooting to a fanciful extent, it must, we think, be conceded that thorough sportsmen take, for the most part, greater pride and

pleasure in shooting partridges or grouse than in shooting pheasants. For, although upon a well-preserved manor or moor the partridges and grouse are accustomed to have grain, or damaged raisins, or some other kind of food served out to them periodically by the keeper's hand, there is in both these birds an inherent wildness which is indestructible, and forbids their domestication or reduction to such a state of tameness as is commonly found to exist among pheasants reared at Holkham, or Bradgate, or in other well-stocked English coverts. No one who has watched an experienced gamekeeper advancing into a covert of which he has long been the custodian, and spreading the shocks of grain along the ground for his pheasants to eat, can hope to persuade himself much longer that the bright-plumed Chinese or Asiatic fowl upon which he is about to exercise his skill as a marksman differs materially in nature from the Shanghai roosters which he has left behind him in the neighbouring farmyard. But let a stranger stand near to the spot on which partridges or grouse are habitually fed, and he will have occasion to observe that the natural shyness of the bird will forbid his feeding or drawing near to the ground upon which the encroacher stands.

That which has always been regarded as the great charm of shooting in the eyes of Mr. Daniel, the author of "Rural Sports," and of other old-fashioned sportsmen of his date and class, has been its approximation to hunting in this latter word's widest sense—that is to say, to the pursuit of wild birds and quadrupeds with a view to their destruction. It is impossible to read Mr. Daniel's pleasant volumes, or Colonel Hawker's "Instructions to Young Sportsmen," without discerning the attractions which sea-coast wild-fowl shooting possessed for both above all other kinds of sport. It may be safely asserted that no boy with any taste for field-sports ever saw Colonel Hawker's well-known picture, entitled "Commencement of a Cripple-Chase, after firing Two Pounds of Shot into a Skein of Brent Goose, and Two Wild Swans," without retaining a lively recollection of it until his dying hour. So natural is the taste for wild and adventurous shooting, which is innate in every man who is worthy of the name of man, and which it takes a long course of luxury, and of battue-shooting, and of hot luncheons among the brown fern, to finally eradicate! But there is no class of sportsmen in whom contempt and distaste for English battue-shooting are more sure to be found than in those who have tasted the delights of the wild shooting which Hindostan, and Asia Minor, and North America, and many other regions of the world, furnish in abundance. It is difficult for any one who has long been dependent upon his gun or rifle in a wild country for his daily supply of food, to understand what pleasure or satisfaction there can be in entering a covert plentifully stocked with birds and animals, all of them more or less tame, and in shooting down we know not how many hundred head of hares, pheasants, and rabbits

within three or four hours. "We have always looked upon these exhibitions with pain, and we conceive them totally opposed in principle to the real spirit of English sports. We never could comprehend a man's feelings in killing a quantity of game under such circumstances. Sport it certainly is not." These are the words of as genuine a sportsman as ever pulled trigger. Unfashionable as it may be to promulgate one word in deprecation of the taste for battue-shooting now growing up among young Englishmen of rank, we must confess that we never read the account of a wonderful day's shooting in Lord Stamford's, or any other nobleman's coverts, without regarding such records with pain and aversion. The creative and sustaining principle of genuine sport is to be found in the laborious uncertainty of rambling for hours over forest and moorland without knowing what wild bird or animal may rise or spring up before us. A woodcock or snipe, three or four brace of partridges or pheasants, half a dozen hares or rabbits, a couple of teal or wild-duck, picked up in a wild walk of this kind, outweigh, in our estimation, the value of a hundred pheasants or hares massacred in a battue. It is singular to observe how outrageously the French, when plagiarising, as is now their wont, our English pastimes, parody the worst features of their adopted sport. We have never read such a burlesque of an English battue as the account of the day's shooting given in November last by the Emperor Napoleon to the Emperor of Austria in the woods of Compiègne and Pierrefond. At eleven o'clock nineteen shooters arrived at the scene of action in a series of chars-à-banc. The Austrians were dressed in violet velvet, with precious stones for buttons. The nineteen shooters were divided into two parties—the Emperor's party, consisting of ten, and the other party of nine individuals. The beaters and loaders amounted in number to two hundred and fifty. The Emperor of Austria was armed with ten muzzle-loaders, which were loaded by six keepers, who came expressly from Vienna for the purpose. The Emperor Napoleon shot, as usual, with muzzle-loaders. Shooting commenced at easy eleven, and left off at sharp four. Within this time a total of 3,829 head were massacred, whereof 600 head fell before the Emperor of Austria's, and 402 head before the Emperor Napoleon's, guns. Out of the sum total killed, 1,978 were pheasants. Allowing time for lunch and other refreshments, it will be seen that in every sixty seconds rather more than fifteen head of game must have fallen. Shades of Daniel and Hawker! What would ye have said, when in the flesh, to such a day's shooting as this!

It is believed, however, by some, that inasmuch as it is absurd to call pheasants "feræ naturæ," and inasmuch as they have to be watched, fed, and prevented from straying at a heavy cost of money, some justification of the maintenance of the severe Game Laws which still exist among us is herein to be found. The current

of that which professes to be the most advanced and enlightened public opinion of the day sets strongly at present against the Game Laws, as being the most objectionable surviving remembrancers of feudal institutions which are still to be found in the midst of us. We shall not here attempt to argue out so vexed and wide-reaching a question as the advisability of retaining or modifying our existing Game Laws. Happily it is now generally conceded by the owners of land that rabbits are vermin, nor would there be much resistance among country gentlemen if a law similar to that which has recently been passed in France, and which declares them to be vermin, were to be promulgated in England. No one can pretend that the most scientific and expensive style of farming, such, for instance, as that which prevails in the Carse of Gowrie, is compatible with the existence of rabbits viewed as game, and subject only to be destroyed at the option or caprice of the landlord and his keepers. Nor can it be denied that if a landlord insists upon having a very large show of hares, he must consent to allow to the farmers, upon whose crops they feed, some concession or compensation in the form of reduction of rent, or of right to shoot or course. But as regards the Game Laws which protect flying game, there is not much to be said against them; nor do we think that poachers would, in the main, be gainers if Game Laws were abolished, and if it were enacted that to steal a pheasant or partridge was precisely the same offence as to steal a chicken or turkey. A more serious objection to the strict preservation of game than any that arises from the maintenance and enforcement of the Game Laws in their present form seems to us to crop up in the frequent occurrence of severe combats or affrays between gamekeepers and poachers, attended, as they too frequently are, by fatal results. The recent murder of Lord Wharncliffe's head-keeper, and the recollection of many similar disasters which have occurred within the memory of every middle-aged man, cannot fail to produce a sobering effect upon all thoughtful and conscientious proprietors of strictly-preserved estates, and to force upon their consideration the inconvenient question whether they are justified in foro conscientiæ in purchasing the presence of large numbers of hares and pheasants in their woods and fields at so costly a price. There is, of course, much to be said in favour of the preservation of game on the score of the general immunity and protection from robbers and burglars which night-watchers on an estate secure for its farmhouses and tenements. Nevertheless, the responsibility of jeopardising men's lives, or of damaging their health by privation of sleep, with a view to selfish indulgence in what is, after all, but a pastime, is great enough to induce many a landowner, who is devotedly attached to field-sports and a proficient with his gun, to forego the satisfaction of having his coverts overflowing with game, preserved at such an outlay of money, and it may be of blood.

But without further moralising upon the ethics of game preserving, let us proceed to examine what are likely to be the effects produced upon the general interests of shooting in consequence of the introduction of the breech-loader. We have little hesitation in recording our opinion that its substitution for the muzzle-loader will, in the end, produce no less radical a revolution in the history of this widely-spread pastime than was caused half a century ago by the discovery and introduction of the percussion system. Few more striking and pregnant instances of British adherence to tradition can be found than was manifested, between the years 1815 and 1830, by the reluctance of soldiers to accept any other weapon than the flint-lock musket, which had won Albuera and Salamanca, Toulouse and Waterloo. None of our historical soldiers were more ready in most cases to declare themselves swift and peremptory reformers than the family of the Napiers. And yet we find Sir Charles James Napier, the conqueror of Scinde, emphatically protesting, in or about the year 1818, against the introduction of a percussion musket, which, as he insisted, would induce soldiers armed with it to fire too rapidly, and to throw away half their shots. We fancy that we have heard some such language uttered too, with more show of reason, in regard to the recent armament of our infantry with breech-loaders.

Less indisposition, however, to accept a weapon which was evidently destined to be the fire-arm of the future, was exhibited between 1815 and 1825 by British sportsmen than by British soldiers. It will be remembered that we owe the discovery of the percussion principle of igniting gunpowder in muskets by means of detonating powder to the ingenuity of a clergyman. This is not, par parenthèse, the only improvement in the science of destruction for which we are indebted to gentlemen of the same coloured cloth. So long ago as 1807 the Rev. Mr. Forsyth took out the first patent for a percussion musket, nor is it possible even for the least imaginative of men to notice this date without indulging in a passing day-dream upon the possible effects which Mr. Forsyth's discovery might have produced if it had been utilised, during the eight years which followed its publication, by the army of the Duke of Wellington. Nothing, however, was more natural than that this nation, locked, as it was, in a life-and-death grapple with Napoleon, should have had little time or inclination for the investigation of inventions. It was reserved for sportsmen to introduce detonating guns to the favourable notice of the public, and between 1820 and 1830 their use became general. It was in 1822 that Colonel Hawker, while claiming for himself credit as the adapter of the copper cap, instituted a comparison between a duck-gun with detonating lock, and another with flint lock, and demonstrated to his own satisfaction the superiority of the latter. Nevertheless, at that very moment, all the successful young shots of England were revelling in the rapidity of ignition, and the certainty of explosion,

which were the characteristics of the detonator in contradistinction to the flint-lock small-arm. But it is amusing to observe that the slowness of motion, and the disposition to regard all improvement as innovation, which we are accustomed to consider the peculiarities of "the departments" in our own day, were no less markedly discernible in the War Office which had recently conducted England in safety through the greatest struggle she has ever known, and in the mind of the most distinguished soldier whom our country has produced. It is worthy of record that such were the suspicion and distrust with which the authorities viewed the new percussion musket, that it was issued in the first instance only to one company in every regiment. It was not until the efficiency of the weapon was fully established by the decisive victories gained with it on the Sutlej, and in the Punjab, that all departmental hostility to it evaporated and passed away. Its introduction into the French army did not take place until the year 1840.

The most noticeable feature in connection with the substitution of the detonator for the flint lock appears, at first, to have been that the shooting of many men who had been all their lives very indifferent performers with the ancient weapon became sensibly improved when they used the modern. Colonel Hawker found it necessary to alter his instructions for young sportsmen, and to advise them to shoot three, instead of six, inches ahead of a bird flying rapidly across them at 30 yards' distance. But it is curious to remark that the "bags," or returns of game killed, do not appear to have been greatly augmented by the superiority of the new weapon. There is no other estate in England which, as regards the fecundity, accuracy, and antiquity of its annals and anecdotes of shooting, can compare with Holkham. It is hardly necessary to add that no records or annals require to be more jealously and inquisitorially scrutinised than those which have for their subject the shooting achievements of famous shots. We beg at once, and emphatically, to record our protest against the possibility of believing what has been repeated in a hundred books, magazine articles, and journals, that Mr. Osbaldeston once killed ninety-eight pheasants out of one hundred shots. Still more incredible is a story inserted in a rambling book called "Sportascrapiana," and which records the score of Captain Horatio Ross in a pigeon-match decided at the Red House, in the year 1828. We quote the words as they appear in "Sportascrapiana:"—"Pigeon match; 80 shots—30 yards' rise—5 traps. Captain Ross scored 76 birds killed; three more hit the top of the paling and counted as misses, but fell within the ground. One got over the paling, owing to the right barrel missing fire, but feathered with the left." What may be the precise meaning of these last words we leave the reader to determine. But we imagine that he will have little difficulty, whatever may be his estimate of Captain Ross's prof-

ciency as a marksman, in pronouncing this score to be an exaggeration.

But to return to Holkham; it would appear that the bags secured by Mr. Coke and his friends at the end of the last century did not differ materially from those reported immediately after the introduction of the percussion gun. Thus we read that in October, 1797, Mr. Coke, shooting, of course, with a flint gun, upon his manor at Warham, and within a mile's circumference, bagged forty brace of birds in eight hours out of ninety-three shots, killing every bird singly. This story smacks a little of the same vein as is apparent in those about Osbaldeston and Ross to which we have referred, but it has the advantage over them of being believed at Holkham. Again, in January, 1803, Mr. Coke, Sir John Shelley, and Mr. Thomas Sheridan went over to Houghton, and, traversing the very ground of which the shooting has lately been rented by the Prince of Wales, killed in one day 14 brace of hares, 16 couple of rabbits, 24 brace of pheasants, 13 brace of partridges, and 16 couple of woodcocks. No doubt the Prince of Wales and his associates have made larger bags than this on the same ground during the late season; but it has often been noticed, with surprise, that the percussion gun was not signalised on its introduction by the largely-increased size of the bags which might have been expected. It is a matter for speculation whether this is to be accounted for by believing that men who had long been familiar with the flint gun did not at first understand how to make the most of their new weapon, or whether it arose from greater scarcity of game at the beginning of this century.

Explain it as we may, no more certain evidence of this fact can be adduced than is furnished by the record of the now forgotten, but at one time much-celebrated shooting-match which took place between Colonel Anson and Captain Ross in November, 1828, at the shooting-quarters which Lord de Roos then rented at Mildenhall, in Suffolk. It cannot fail to have been remarked by sporting antiquarians that the shooting-matches which were so much in vogue thirty or forty years ago, and in which the prowess of two rival marksmen was tested at the expense of partridges or pigeons, have in modern times become as obsolete and unfashionable as races over the Beacon Course at Newmarket, or as pugilistic encounters in a 24-foot ring. Be this as it may, there is, perhaps, no similar match that ever excited so much interest, or of which the fame has lived for so many years, as the great "Ross and Anson match" to which we have just alluded. We are indebted for the following account of it to a description which emanated from the pen of Captain Ross himself. He relates that in July, 1828, he was returning from the Red House at Battersea, in company with Colonel Anson and Lord de Roos. They had been shooting at pigeons, and Lord de Roos, after remarking that no one had a chance against Captain Ross at

pigeons, inquired whether he had equal confidence in his power of shooting game or partridges. Upon receiving an affirmative reply, Lord de Roos proposed that Captain Ross should present himself at Mildenhall upon the first day of the following November, prepared to shoot partridges against any man Lord de Roos produced. It was agreed that the two rivals were to start at sunrise by the watch, and to shoot until sunset without any halt; that no dogs were to be used, but that they were to walk about 40 or 50 yards apart, with two or three men between, or on one side of them; that it was not necessary that any birds should be picked up, but that if a bird was seen by the umpire to drop, it should be considered sufficient. The bet was £200 a side, but to this amount both antagonists added considerably before the event came off. The rest shall be told in Captain Ross's own words:—

"We all breakfasted at Mildenhall by candlelight, and were in line ready to start at the correct moment when by the watch the sun had risen; for we could see no sun, the country being enveloped in mist. Colonel Anson was a particularly fast and strong walker, and seemed to fancy he was able to outwalk me. I was not sorry to see him go off 'at score,' as I knew that I was in the highest possible training, and that I was able to keep the pace up without halting for fifteen or sixteen hours. Everything was conducted with the greatest fairness. We changed order every hour, and as Colonel Anson was able to hold on at the same pace, we were fighting against each other as fairly as two men could.

"The Colonel had luck on his side, as the birds rose more favourably for him than for me, and in the course of the match he got eleven more shots than I did; the consequence being that at one time he was seven birds ahead of me. About two o'clock, however, I saw evident signs that he had pretty nearly pumped himself out. The old Squire rode up to me and said, 'Ross, go along! he'll lie down directly, and die,' fancying that he was viewing a beaten fox. I was thus able to go right away from the Colonel; and as the birds were so wild, in consequence of the crowd and noise, that few shots were got nearer than 50 or 60 yards, I gradually made up my lee way.

"A quarter of an hour before the expiration of the time when the watch would indicate sunset, Mr. Charles Greville and Colonel Russell rode up to me, and said that Colonel Anson could walk no more; but that he was one bird ahead of me, and Lord de Roos had authorised them to propose to me to make it a drawn match. I had a great deal of money, about £1,000, depending on the result, and had not had a shot for the last ten minutes; so, after a moment's consideration, I came to the conclusion that at that late hour, when the birds were all out of the turnips and feeding on the stubble, it was too large a sum to risk on the chance of getting a brace of birds in a quarter of an hour. I therefore agreed to make it a drawn match. I was as

fresh as when I started, and offered to start then and there, and go on foot to London against any one present, for £500. The number of birds killed by each was absurdly small—only, I think, twenty-five or twenty-six brace. We dined at Mildenhall, and were capitally entertained by Lord de Roos, who had the best of French cooks and the best of French wines." Some time after these words were written, Captain Ross added to them thus:—"Alas! alas! when I look back to that evening! Every one then assembled in the dining-room at Mildenhall, with the exception of myself, is now in his grave; and our polished and accomplished host died a disgraced man!"

This chronicle of a memorable match, although not without interest even after the lapse of well-nigh forty years, is chiefly serviceable on the present occasion as illustrating the smallness of the bag which two of the best shots in England were able to make in 1828 with the newly-introduced percussion gun. Undoubtedly, the facility of loading was not nearly so great between 1820 and 1830 as it became subsequently, between 1840 and 1850. Another lesson which this and all similar matches serve to teach is, the impossibility of fairly testing the comparative skill with the gun of any two men by subjecting them to a single trial of strength. Even the best shots are subject, as Hawker remarks, to great inequality in their shooting; and, in addition, the accident of good or bad luck as to the lie of the birds, will never fail to incline the scale one way or the other, if the two antagonists are as to skill nearly on a level with each other. Fashion, however much it may have deteriorated upon other points, has shown itself discriminating and sagacious in discarding such shooting-matches in the middle of the nineteenth century as were in vogue and popular at its commencement. No one was fonder of these matches in his youth than the late Mr. Osbaldeston; and, it must be added, that few men ever submitted to defeat, which, indeed, was seldom his portion, with so bad a grace. It cannot be doubted that a disposition to get up matches for money between friends, and to promote competition by stimulating men to ride or to shoot against each other, is conducive to anything rather than to good fellowship. For these reasons, we hail with satisfaction the fact that such matches as, according to the author of "Sportascrapiana," were continually being made between Colonel Anson, Lord Kennedy, Messrs. Osbaldeston, Farquharson, Cruikshank, Budd, and many more, are now scarcely ever, if ever, proposed.

It is, perhaps, as well that, in these days of breech-loaders, shooting-matches should have gone out of fashion; for few indeed are the partridge manors in England which could stand having many matches shot over them by crack young marksmen of the present time, armed with this weapon. We heard it lately remarked that there are not many coverts in England of which Mr. Thomas De Grey, M.P. for West Norfolk, would not make a clean sweep in three hours, if he

was turned loose in them, armed with his couple of breech-loaders, and with directions to slay and to spare not. It is too late in the day for us to enter now into an elaborate demonstration of the vast superiority of the breech-loading shot gun over its predecessor, for this superiority is all but universally admitted and confessed. The time has long gone by when it was necessary for a sporting writer to take the course adopted in 1857 by the "Old Shekarry," who, in October of that year, advanced thirty reasons in the Field newspaper for preferring breech-loaders to any other weapon. The breech-loader now occupies the field, in more senses than one, and reigns, like Alexander, without a rival. The "Old Shekarry's" thirty reasons seem to us susceptible of considerable condensation or compression. The chief advantages of the breech-loader may be summed up in a few words:—1. It may be fired eight times while a muzzle-loader is fired twice. 2. It is much safer, and the loader's hand is never in jeopardy. 3. There is little or no recoil. 4. It hits harder and shoots quicker than its rival. 5. It can be reloaded noiselessly, and without change of position, and without soiling the butt of the gun. 6. The charge can be drawn in an instant, and snipe shot, or duck shot, or ball, can be inserted or removed at will.

It is impossible to overrate the value of this last-named advantage to men who, like the "Old Shekarry," are accustomed to shoot in India, or Africa, or in regions frequented by dangerous wild beasts. There are few greater disadvantages to a good hunter when on a trail, or when stalking a tickle quarry, than to have two or three persons at his heels, carrying his extra guns or rifles, and trebling or quadrupling the noise which he makes in forcing his way through brushwood. Moreover, the experienced hunter, when in pursuit of "big game," such as lions or tigers, greatly prefers to be dependent upon himself alone. Many a sportsman's life has been endangered by his gun-bearers bolting at a critical moment, and leaving him, with both barrels discharged, in the immediate proximity of a wounded and maddened animal. Lastly, it is no slight advantage to a sportsman, tired out after a hard day's fag, to have but one weapon to clean, instead of having to set to work upon four or five guns or rifles, and to perform a task which no man who has shot in Asia, Africa, or America, and who values his own life, ever intrusts to any hand save his own. Now, the possession of one good breech-loader, which is an armoury in itself, sets the sportsman free from all these disadvantages which we have enumerated. While shooting snipe in a jungle, he is not disconcerted at finding himself in the neighbourhood of tiger, or bear, or elephant, for he can substitute a ball for snipe-shot without an instant's delay, and without taking his eye off his enemy. In fact, to sum up the whole case in favour of the breech-loader in the "Old Shekarry's" emphatic words:—"He who has once used a breech-loading gun or rifle will no more think of going

back to a muzzle-loader than the crack marksman at Hythe would return to Brown Bess."

But admitting, as we do, the general superiority of the breech-loader as a weapon framed for the destruction of game, it is impossible not to entertain grave doubts as to the maintenance of the same abundance of game in Great Britain which our predecessors luxuriated in during the second quarter of the present century. The passion of the day is for heavy bags of game shot in comparatively short spaces of time,—say, in from three to four hours,—and with little heed given by the shooters to the question whether the bird which they destroy is a mangled heap of feathers when it falls, or whether it is killed at a proper distance, and in neat and sportsman-like style. By no class of men will a more pregnant sermon be preached, as to the visible effects of the breech-loader upon the birds which it destroys, than by the poulterers of London. Baily, and Fisher, and many of their professional brethren, will tell you that out of the pheasants sent to them, the proportion of birds fit to appear upon the table is continually growing smaller. It was for some time pretended by the champions of the muzzle-loader that it delivered its shot more closely and forcibly than its rival. No one who examines the pheasants now killed in a battue will have any doubt as to the breech-loader being the harder-hitting weapon of the two. So thoroughly is this fact admitted by the London poulterers, that they have invented a method of utilising pheasants which are too hard hit to admit of being roasted, by cutting off the mangled portions of the breast, and making up the remaining portions into minced meat for pheasant or game pies. But there is another fashion, also greatly on the increase in England, which seems to us to bode little good to future abundance of game,—the fashion, we mean, of driving moors and manors, and of killing partridges and grouse from behind a hedge or peat-stack, as they are driven over your head. It is notorious that there are many estates in England, especially in the moorland districts of Derbyshire, Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cumberland, and Westmoreland, where, in former times, a moor, beaten in the ordinary way, yielded at most twelve or fifteen brace of grouse in a day, picked up by the laborious exertions of two or three good shots —and that not for many days. But the same moor, if driven according to the modern fashion, will now yield without difficulty, to the same number of guns, 130 or 150 brace in a day. As an illustration of the truth of what we are saying, we have but to instance the Duke of Devonshire's moors in the neighbourhood of Chatsworth. We have all heard a great deal of the grouse disease in Scotland during the past year. Undoubtedly the inscrutable epidemic which has been fatal to so many birds is, in the main, accountable for their greatly diminished numbers. But may it not fairly be asked whether ten years of driving grouse, and of killing them with breech-loaders, have not also something to do with it, and whether a continuation of the same

practices for ten years more will not make itself felt in a manner which will tell very disagreeably upon the rent-roll of many Highland lairds?

The breech-loader, like all other labour-saving machines, is unquestionably a valuable boon to humanity, but it presupposes that the time which it saves in killing game is to be made use of in higher and more profitable occupations. It is a frequent remark of Americans, when commenting upon the numerical strength of the leisure classes in England, that in creating the universe, God made no provision for men and women into whose scheme of daily life no thought or necessity for labour enters as an essential ingredient. If young and luxurious gentlemen fancy that they can, by using the breech-loader, kill as much in four hours as their fathers and forefathers killed in three or four times that space, and that they can also continue to shoot as many days in the year as their predecessors, it needs no prophet to announce to them that they are reckoning without their host. The destruction of game, perpetually indulged in as a pastime, and with no reference to the value as articles of food possessed by the birds or animals killed, must be pronounced by a severe moralist to be in the highest degree reprehensible. And it is worthy of remark that the increased facility for making large bags, conferred upon the sportsman by the breech-loader, has subtracted and withdrawn all general interest from the records of such shooting feats as fifteen years ago were upon every tongue. For years and years the present Lord Panmure and Mr. Campbell of Monee were quoted as the only two men in Scotland who had ever killed a hundred brace of grouse in one day. This feat they accomplished with two or three muzzle-loading guns, one of which was put into their hands after every shot, freshly loaded. There were not wanting sportsmen, however, who thought even this feat eclipsed by the present Lord Wenlock, who, upon a moor in Perthshire, killed ninety-eight brace of grouse with one muzzle-loading gun, loaded throughout the day by his own hand. But whatever interest once attached to these achievements with the muzzle-loader, has now all but faded away in connection with the breech-loader. It is felt that the breech-loader is so much more rapid and deadly a weapon, that few people now care to be told whether Mr. De Grey or any one of his contemporaries have killed 150 or 200 brace of grouse with it in a day. Let the rising generation of sportsmen take good heed, in conclusion, lest in their anxiety to astonish the world with magnificent "bags," they succeed in estranging from a noble sport that degree of popular favour which it has so long enjoyed, and a forfeiture of which could not prove otherwise than fatal in the end to its prosperity and longevity.

Happily, in these days of easy locomotion, there are abundant opportunities for wealthy and adventurous young sportsmen to amuse themselves outre mer with more stirring sport than the woods and

fields of England, the moorlands of Scotland, or the bogs of Ireland supply. The wonders of the African continent, as a field for ambitious marksmen, have been revealed to us within the last twenty-five years by a succession of mighty hunters. India continues to offer to Englishmen the same fecundity of sport for which her Ghauts and Himalayas, her jungles and sunburnt wastes, her nullahs and forests, have been perpetually celebrated. But, should the sportsman desire to pursue every variety of game upon a noble continent, rejoicing in a summer climate which makes life in the open air one continual feast, let him repair to the broad plains and prairies or the majestic lakes and rivers of North America, and take his fill of sport, with bear, buffalo, panther, deer, and every variety of land and water-fowl for the objects of his pursuit. We have often meditated upon the exquisite delight with which Colonel Hawker would have launched his Hampshire canoe upon the broad bosom of the Potomac river, and what havoc he would have wrought among the wild swans and brent-geese, and canvas-back ducks, and blue-wings, and all the hosts of wild-fowl with whose cries the whole surface of the stream is vocal after nightfall. What additions would he not here have made to what he calls his "wild-fowl artillery;" what novel instructions would not his ingenuity and experience have suggested for approaching the wary and well-nigh unapproachable wild swan! "Those who have walked," says Colonel Montague, "on a summer's evening, by the sedgy sides of unfrequented rivers, must remember a variety of notes from different water-fowl; the loud scream of the wild goose, the croaking of the mallard, the whining of the lapwing, the tremulous neighings of the jack-snipe, and the booming of the bittern."

If it had been the gallant colonel's fortune "to run the blockade" by crossing the Potomac frequently on dark nights during the recent American war, he would have had ample opportunities of greatly enlarging his list of river-birds and his description of their cries. But whatever may be our passing apprehensions as to the substitution in England of shooters for sportsmen, and whatever our suspicions as to the incompatibility of unrestrictedly-used breech-loaders with the maintenance of an undiminished head of game, we have no fears whatever about any diminution of the pluck, energy, and accuracy of aim which have always distinguished British sportsmen in every part of the globe. Britain will still, we doubt not, continue to produce a never-failing supply of men like Gordon Cumming and Sir Samuel Baker; and if at any time a long course of hot luncheons under the hedge-side, or of kid-gloved manipulation of the breech-loader, may have sapped for a moment the manliness of one of our young porphyrogeniti, it will take but a brief taste of the delights of wild shooting in any land beyond sea to send his blood once more coursing hotly through his veins, and to vindicate his manhood, enterprise, and endurance against all sneers and aspersions.

ON HUMAN LIGNITES.

CHEMISTS, I am assured, have never succeeded in ascertaining what peculiar function is performed in vegetable life by the ligneous part of plants; for though it would be an easy solution of the difficulty to say that it was totally inert, experience would contradict the assertion, since all physicians are aware that the active principle of vegetable agents invariably loses when disassociated from this seemingly inert portion, and that what are pharmaceutically called "extracts" are invariably deficient in some of the qualities of the compound structure. Various ingenious theories have been thrown out to account for this strange fact, some alleging that the ligneous principle retarded, and thus concentrated the action of the energetic agent; others averring that the qualities of the so-called inert part were only called forth during the action, and under the stimulating influence of the heroic element.

I must, I grieve to say, leave the controversy where I found it. I have not a word to say to either side of the argument. What led me to the topic, indeed, was not any especial interest in the problem itself, —interesting as it is,—as the question, whether we have not in our daily life phenomena very closely resembling these that I speak of? Does not the world contain a large amount of humanity without any assignable use, who do not seem in any way to influence the course of events, who neither weaken nor strengthen life? Do they not occupy a very large space in this small planet of ours, and are not the mass of mankind ligneous people?

Are not all public bodies, clubs, associations, vestries, even parliaments, largely ligneous? Do you know an institution, a society, do you know even a family, without a ligneous ingredient? Can you lay your hand on your heart and declare that fully three-fourths of your acquaintances are not ligneous?

Certain clubs are almost entirely ligneous, and so with some dinner-parties. The great question then is, What is the function that these people perform in life? For though the Scotch adage has it that "it takes a' sort o' folk to mak' a warld," I do not hold that explanation to be satisfactory in a scientific point of view. To say that they are what chemists call the vehicle which holds in suspension or solution the more active ingredients of life will not meet the case; for these people are generally disposed to associate together; they deal with each other, and intermarry and beget other Lignites. They are not, therefore, essentially united with active agents.

I have given the matter much thought. First of all, I had hoped that by reflecting on ligneous people I might have arrived at the solution of that curious problem in vegetable life with which I started in this paper; but the more I considered the question, the more interest did I find myself attaching to the illustration, so that at last it was ligneous humanity which entirely engaged my thoughts and occupied my sympathies.

Lignites were not made without their use, if we could only find it; this was the axiom which I kept ever before me. If zeal and a strong will could have conquered the difficulty, I should have had a triumphant success. Never did a man go more heart and soul into an inquiry. I thought over it by day; I dreamt of it by night; I cross-questioned all the shrewdest men of my acquaintance; I made patient study of the dull ones. I went down to Margate; I spent a winter at Bath; I tried Harrogate,—great centres of lignosities, to watch their ways and note their habits; but they were such close imitations of other men, that it seemed like the same landscape seen through a smoked glass.

A cynical observer once said that between the best and the worst physician there was only the difference between a pound and a guinea. What a dreadful thought if a similar proportion were to rule between the ligneous and the real men! This could not be, for however closely, as I said, the lignites dressed like the real men, walked, rode, dined, and behaved at church like them, the two were in their natures essentially and totally different. From deep study and close investigation, I perceived that though the ligneous element was to be found in every class and condition of life,—from the peer to the peasant,—it abounded more in the well-to-do middle rank, where there is a fair share of comforts, and not an over-proportion of high ambitions. In the artisan class, amongst the better paid, lignosity was not unfrequent. It pervaded largely the class of shopkeepers; grocers had it, and oilmen; and it was frequent amongst hairdressers and wig-makers. It was rare enough with soldiers or sailors on full pay, but actually ravaged them when they retired from the service. Lawyers and doctors had it sparingly, but parsons were much afflicted with it, and generally took it of a severe type, and were what doctors call well-marked cases. Amongst men in high office, some diplomatists were very strong instances; but indeed a subdued form of the disease, what might be styled Lignitis mitis, prevails pretty generally through all the ranks of diplomacy.

Now comes the question. Why were these people created? What function do they fulfil? What is their allotted part in the grand scheme of human existence? They could not have been intended to ornament life, nor to render it more pleasurable. Can it be, then, that they are the bitter tonics of existence which fortify and brace us? Is it that they are a sort of moral rhubarb designed to stimulate the stomachs of our depraved natures?

Certain fish, the physiologist tells us, swallow small stones, by the aid of which they triturate the food in their stomach, and render it more easy of digestion. Are the Lignites, then, our small stones? Are these people hard and gritty with a purpose? And is their function in life that amount of friction they supply, and that salutary hindrance to progress, at which ignorance may chafe, but which wisdom sanctions and approves? I almost venture to hope, if I have not hit on the solution of the great puzzle, I have gone near it. I know what a fallacious support a mere personal experience affords to any one in a scientific inquiry, and how frequently instances are subjects of deception. Still, I would prefer my claim to some knowledge of this matter, as one long conversant with Lignites and their ways. From a variety of circumstances, I have been much thrown amongst these people. Indeed, for a portion of my life I saw, spoke to, and moved amongst little other than Lignites, and I have come to the firm conclusion that Lignites are a necessary complement of human existence, and without a certain amount of them the great business of life could not be conducted. Lignites, by their natural slowness of comprehension, by their instinctive dulness, require that in all discussions not only the very amplest explanations of everything should be given, but that continual repetitions should be employed; so that, as the strength of a chain is the strength of its weakest link, the intelligence of any assembly can be gauged by the smallest capacity present. In this way Lignites do great service. Like Charles Fox's barometer;—whatever the Lignite understands, by that few will be puzzled.

In this way parliamentary Lignites are of infinite value. When one of these rises in his place to say that he hopes it will not be imputed to any defective intelligence on his part if he owns that a portion of the right hon. gentleman's statement was totally above his comprehension, the "hear, hear," from the back benches proclaims the presence of many Lignites similarly mystified and be-muddled.

In private life Lignites have a grand function. They form the respectability of the nation. It is to their calm impassiveness, to the statue-like immobility of their moral features, that men look up for the rule of life. In the solemn gravity of their grand maxim, "We never do it," there is a boundless depth of wisdom. Where these words ring out, argument never comes, and reason retires abashed and humiliated. "We never do it" is stronger than logic, just as the natural affections of mankind are stronger than law. "We never do it" is not merely prohibitive; it is condemnatory; it declares that while you or I, in our ignorance, may be habituated to this, that, or the other, there is, to the higher appreciation of superior natures, a warning voice audible enough to say, "Do not do it." This voice Lignites hear; and from their over-watchfulness, as one would say, they were ever listening for its utterances.

Lignites are great at dinner-parties; indeed, without them there could be none. The general dulness of their presence aids digestion, and induces that amount of drowsiness so conducive to the functions of the duodenum. Conversation should never be over-spiced any more than one's curry, and it is as the boiled rice with the curry that these people come in to dull the sense of taste, and refresh the palate by insipidity. The Anglo-Saxon family is far richer in Lignites than the Latin races, but France has a considerable share of them, and they actually abound in the magistracy. Germany, however, is the native soil where ligneous people attain their fullest development. After race itself,—diathesis the doctors call it,—the desk has an immense influence in the formation of the true ligneous temperament.

In the United States, where the Bore is certainly well marked, it is strange that there are not more Lignites; but so it is; the pompous self-sufficiency, the dignified dulness that we meet in England, and never dine out without encountering, is rare in America.

The Bore, of which, as Carlyle informs us, America possesses thirty odd million specimens, is therefore not the Lignite. Indeed, they are totally and essentially different. The Bore is aggressive, insistant, self-asserting, and demonstrative. The Lignite is calmly impassive, and supremely indifferent to all outside himself; and, as he studiously closes the windows and draws down the blinds of his own nature, you can know nothing of what goes on within. The Bore is many-sided, and, so to say, prismatic. The Lignite is round, smooth, and uniform, like a billiard ball.

In company with the Bore you are driven to detest existence; with the Lignite you simply despair of it.

Let us be just, however, and acknowledge that without Lignites the public service of this country could not go on. Where, but for them, would you find chief clerks, and under-secretaries, and school inspectors, and consuls, and gaugers? They are the bureaucracy of the nation, and of them come the men of arithmetic and official returns, census reports, and details of sewerage.

No small share of the imputed superiority of English morality depends upon the grand impassiveness and the severe dulness of the Lignite nature; and so long as we have a large class well dressed, scrupulously neat, quiet of manner, and of a general dreariness of deportment, blending with our social gatherings,—dancing with us, walking with us, praying with us, and tax-paying with us,—the respectability of our nation is assured; and however we may be beaten in shipbuilding, in iron casting, in "textiles," or in crockery, British morality will have the true trade-mark, and our Lignite stamp us as the most respectable of all European peoples.

Long live the people, then, "who never do it," even though they carry the principle to the perusal of the present paper.

THE IRISH CHURCH.

An Irish Protestant would, perhaps, hesitate to apply to his Church Dryden's proud line on the Papacy—

"Oft doomed to death, though fated not to die."

Yet that threatened institutions live long has been abundantly proved by the history of the Protestant Establishment in Ireland. For now nearly forty years, since Catholic emancipation, it has been the target for wit, scorn, invective, and deliberate condemnation. Every liberal statesman in England has expressed disapproval of it "in principle," and we doubt whether any conservative statesman of the present day would assert that granted a tabula rasa in Ireland, it would be wise or just to impose now, for the first time, on the Irish people an institution of the kind. Yet with all this general agreement of opinion, the religious, political, and practical difficulties of the situation are so great, that out of twenty writers or speakers who discuss it, it is difficult to find even one who proposes a plan, or indicates the outlines of a new arrangement. Young politicians of this generation may suppose that now, with Irish disaffection rife, the time has surely arrived when "something must be done," but a glance at history will show that thirty-three years ago there seemed a much better prospect of a permanent settlement. The great liberal party, refreshed from its Reform victory, regained office in 1835 on a motion proposed by Lord John Russell, declaring that a portion of the revenues of the Irish Church should be applied to education. Here was the distinct pledge of a great party. Liberal ministries have been in power for twenty-five out of the thirty-three years that have elapsed since then, and yet that pledge is still unredeemed. The collection of tithes has been altered, but the Established Church still remains what it always was,—a State Church, supported in the main by a tax on Irish land,—paid directly by the landlord and indirectly by the tenant,—and out of its ample revenues not one shilling has been devoted to the purposes of education. Liberal leaders, however, bear very resignedly this defeat of their old cause; and it is curious to note in these matters the different kinds of political dishonesty that belong to the two great parties in the State. Tory ministers are forced to adopt the measures they denounced in opposition; liberal ministers are obliged to abandon the principles they proposed when not in power. The Tories attain office by promises of

resistance that they falsify when on the Treasury Bench. The Liberals gain power by promises of performance which, as officials, they fail to fulfil. As we have indicated, the Irish Church presents practical difficulties enough to daunt Danton himself; but how is it that the leader of the Opposition always refuses to see any of the difficulties which are made so very clear to him when he has to put his ideas into a Cabinet measure?

It would be presumption in any writer to indicate imperatively the one right way of discussing this inveterately vexed question, yet it may be permissible to suggest that there are several wrong ways of beating about the bush. For instance, there can, we think, be no doubt that while discussions as to the legitimate or illegitimate descent of the present Establishment from the ancient Irish Church may be very interesting to the historian, the antiquarian, or the theologian, and very fascinating for Dryasdust, they have no political interest whatever. Even if we grant everything demanded by the clerical friends of the Church, and much more; if we grant that St. Patrick was a staunch Protestant, who hated the Bishop of Rome, abjured the mass, detested the five extra sacraments, had "one wife" and several children, and would have upheld the supremacy of Henry VIII. if he had only heard of him in time, what then? What is that to us at the present day? We find the majority of the Irish people non-Protestants. If they have fallen away from the pure faith of their forefathers, so much the worse for them in this world, according to Carlyle—and in the next, according to theologians; but that does not help us out of our political difficulty, which simply arises from their discontent at the existence of a Church they refuse to recognise. If, up to thirty years ago, the whole Irish people were Protestant, and since then they had all become "verts," the political difficulties of the position would still remain. We should still have to face the problem;—is it right to tax a whole people for the support of the creed of a minority?

"Another way," as Mrs. Glasse says, may be indicated among the many improper methods of discussing the topic. Roman Catholic writers record the rapine, butchery, and penal laws that were used as weapons by the first founders of the Irish Church; but though a student analysing Irish history and Irish character, may profitably study these matters to find out the sources of many unabated defects and evils in the character and condition of the people, still it would be unjust and absurd to make the quiet parsons of the present day answerable in any degree for the sins of their ancestors. If we come to that kind of historical recrimination, this European method of defiling forefathers' graves, who would get the worst of it?—Roman Catholics or Protestants? the descendants of Inquisitors and peasant assassins, or the great-grandchildren of the framers of the Penal Laws? Surely it is better to leave such irritating and irrelevant references entirely aside.

There is a third way of discussing this question, unobjectionable in itself, but hardly, we fear, applicable. It is sometimes suggested that we should "recur to first principles;" and ask, "Is it right to tax any man for the support of any institution of which he does not approve?" The answer must be that, whether it is right or wrong, we do it every day when we take an extra war twopence in the income tax from a Quaker, or pay Roman Catholic chaplains and schools out of the Consolidated Fund, fed as it is mainly by taxes imposed on Protestants. Other first principles are also not very useful guides. The Bishop of Ossory says that it is the duty of the State to maintain for the use of the people a Church that will bestow on them at once "a pure ritual and Scriptural truth." But can we afford to take up this principle and carry it out in act? If we do, we must plant an Episcopal Church in every Scotch parish,—sadly wanting at present in "pure ritual,"—and other institutions of the kind amongst the Canadian Papists, now destitute of what the Bishop would call "Scriptural truth;" to say nothing of India, where the enforcement of the idea would simply mean the total loss of that empire,—a small sacrifice for a true principle, but a serious loss if the principle is not true, and only put forth as a cheval de bataille by the defenders of the Irish Church. Moreover, if we accept this missionary character as the true "note" of the Irish Church, its defenders should altogether change their tone. For instance, there is in the diocese of Cork a parish called Nathlash, in which the "Protestant population" amounts to one man. This circumstance has not daunted our "missionary" zeal. There is a church, an incumbent at £200 a year, the church is yearly repaired, so that the expense for the four years ending 1865 amounted to £113 9*s.* 3*d.*, and the expense for "church requisites" averages £18 a year. Now, if it is our duty to send missionaries where they are most wanted, there is hardly any part of Ireland where they are more wanted than at Nathlash. The "harvest," consisting of many thousand unconverted Papists, is plentiful, and we can increase the Protestant population a hundred per cent. by simply converting another man. In fact, if it be our duty to spread Scripture truth amongst Irish Papists, England may, next to its expenditure of £20,000,000 for West Indian negroes, point to what it does at Nathlash, as one of the noblest instances on record of its devotion to a great cause; and instead of the Establishment being "a blot," or "an anomaly," or "a dark spot," as some weak persons call it, it is a crowning glory of the great design. Nor is the beauty of the idea affected by the fact that the money is paid by Irish, not English, taxpayers. To make Irish Catholics pay for the salvation of an Irish Protestant is not only economical for us, but beautifully just. It may be that the Irish Church can be defended on lower grounds, but if its defenders take the high ground

of its scriptural truth and missionary character they must, we maintain, regard such instances of our zeal as noble, elevated, and wise. For our part, not seeing the beauty of the Nathlash arrangements, we must decline to take the Bishop of Ossory's idea as a guiding light.

If, then, we are forced to ignore the supposed striking identity of doctrine between St. Patrick and Archbishop Trench, to forget the Penal Laws, and to reject first principles as inapplicate lights, we come to the very plain practical ground of political expediency, a balancing of the amount of good and the amount of mischief caused by our continued maintenance of the Protestant Church. Were the Roman Catholics now in Ireland scattered like our Dissenters amongst a Protestant population, the question could hardly arise in its present formidable shape, just as English Presbyterianism has never obtained the establishment granted to the Scottish Church. But Irish Romanism and Irish "nationality" are practically the same thing. When writers or speakers utter the words, "Justice to Ireland," they mean concessions to the Roman Catholic majority of that country. And this is natural. In tone and sentiment, in the absence of "national" or quasi national Irish feelings, in their almost servile reverence for England and English institutions, in their hostility to the pure Celt, the Protestants of Ireland are more English than the English themselves. Through their ancestors, who profited by our conquests, confiscations, and penal laws, they hold three-fourths of the land as lords of the soil; their Church is supported by the State; and in return they love us, and to show their love they are always abusing for us the mere Irish, the Roman Catholic majority, whose loyalty is supposed to be doubtful, and who have neither lands nor loaves and fishes to make them tranquil and content. Considering these things, men who study what are called Irish questions are obliged to leave Irish Protestants entirely out of sight, just as Indian statesmen, discussing the people of India, always set aside our own countrymen as men of a different class, or as we forget the Episcopalians, when we speak of "Scotland" as Presbyterian in faith. This omission of a respectable minority may seem for a moment insulting, but is really nothing of the sort. It simply means that the Protestants of Ireland are rich, respectable, industrious, well fed, contented, and give us little trouble. They are like the eldest son, for whom nobody kills a calf, and whose attachment to his father excites neither joy nor surprise.

Naturally the first idea of any radical reformer of the Irish Church must be its "utter abolition" as a State establishment, and its entire disendowment,—reducing it to the rank now held by the Irish Roman Catholic Church. "If this were done when it was done, then it were well it were done quickly." But would it be done when it was done? would it be the end of controversy? We fear not. The Irish Romanist

prelates, who demand the secularisation of revenues that once belonged to their own Church, and now to ours, have incurred the condemnation launched in the Pope's Syllabus against such "impious" doctrines; and against such secularisation in Spain and Italy the Church of Rome has constantly protested. But even if we look at Ireland alone, we find an inconsistency in the attitude of the Church of Rome. Not only does it willingly take a grant for Maynooth, but, assenting to the continued existence of Trinity College as in the main a Protestant institution, actually demands an endowment for the Catholic University in Stephen's Green. What difference is there in principle between the priests receiving from the State so many thousands a year in aid of lay and clerical education, and the same priests receiving money from the State for the spiritual training of their flocks? Why should the one class of gifts affect their independence and the other not? It must also be remembered that this demand by Cardinal Cullen for the endowment of his university is new, and is in all likelihood only the forerunner of other demands. These things indicate that the mere withdrawal of State support from the Protestant Church would not settle the question. The Roman Catholics of Ireland are a political as well as a religious party; they have a small compact body of members who on religious questions vote as one man; and a minister hard pressed would be only too happy to purchase support by State gifts, or by giving over to the control of the priests the sums already voted for education, grants that we cannot possibly withdraw. It is said, "All these things will disappear if you establish the voluntary system pure and simple." Perhaps so; but what does a voluntary system, pure and simple, and thoroughly carried out on Irish soil, really imply? It means not only the abolition of the State Church, the Maynooth Grant, and the Regium Donum, but the disendowment of the University of Dublin, the Queen's Colleges, and the National Schools! All these derive their funds from old or new State grants, and all are battle-grounds for the rival sects. If the priests and parsons had no Church revenues to quarrel over, they would fight over University endowments; and these removed, they would continue the controversy as to the allocation of the funds or the management of the National Schools. If, then, we are not prepared,—and nobody can say that we are,—to abstain altogether from State aid to Irish religion and Irish education, we cannot purchase complete or final peace by the mere abolition of the State Church. It is only one of the institutions about which the rival sects are resolved to fight. So long as we grant a single penny to any institution intended for the training of the minds of men, women, or children, so long will priests and parsons fight for the penny, and contend for the control of the institution. A limited abdication of our State claims will therefore do us, we fear, very little good.

Then, apart from questions of endowment, it seems to us that the "utter abolition" of the Irish State Church would be rather awkward work. Would it be still a part of the Church of England? Or would it be merely in communion with it like the Episcopal Church of Scotland? Are the clergy to elect the bishops as in the ancient Church, and the congregations to elect the clergy as in the American Episcopal Church? And are its bishops to remain spiritual peers? On that question the House of Lords itself will be sure to claim exclusive jurisdiction, as it did in the question of life-peers; and the probabilities are that we might see an un-established Archbishop of Dublin still retaining his seat as a Lord of Parliament,—to the continued discontent of his Roman Catholic rivals.

The probable effects in Ireland itself of "utter abolition" must be to a great extent matter of rather uncertain estimate,—almost mere guess-work. The loud talk of the Hillsborough meeting does not, we think, really amount to much. If the Protestants of Ireland were once compelled to support their own clergy, they would probably in a few years look back with surprise to a time when their leaders declared that the withdrawal of State endowments would cause serious injury to their cause. They have wealth, education, position, and traditions of social superiority that tell in all professions. If they cannot afford to pay their own ministers, and build their own churches, voluntaryism anywhere must be a delusion and a snare. When peasants support their priests, landed proprietors can surely afford to pay their parsons. Therefore, as regards pecuniary results, there can be little doubt that Irish Protestant congregations can manage their own financial affairs exceedingly well, and that the withdrawal of State aid would not lead to spiritual destitution. But there is another consideration. The Irish Establishment, as now maintained by the State, is ridiculously over-manned. To give one instance; the suppressed see of Kilfenora, now included in the diocese of Killaloe, still contains the diocesan staff appropriate to its former dignity. There are within its boundaries forty-nine Protestant families,—in all, two hundred and fifty-one souls,—the population of a hamlet, a handful of people that could probably supply a congregation of at most one hundred and fifty hearers; that is, they could be packed into an ordinary drawing-room, or would, perhaps, fill one gallery in a well-sized church. How many Protestant clergymen are paid to minister to their wants? Two? three? six? Well, the "staff" is as follows;—a dean, an archdeacon, a treasurer, a rural dean, a vicar-general, a registrar, four incumbents, and two curates! It must also be remembered that the forty-nine families thus amply provided for in spiritual things, include the families of the clergymen and the church officials. Of course it is very clear that a Free Church in Ireland would never tolerate such absurdities. The Protestants of that country may be rich, and may

develop, if compelled, a liberality now never shown because it is not required; but they would never support a host of useless dignitaries to do nothing but draw salaries they cannot possibly earn, even with the best goodwill.

But apart from the retrenchment that would thus come from abolition, there is another consideration that must strike all who know anything of Irish Protestantism. English Evangelicals sometimes lament that the Dissenters and the Church seem separated by a gulf. Let them cross the Channel, and they will see the reverse of the medal, and be gratified with evangelical union carried to its utmost extent. Young ladies attend Church service in the morning, and in the evening listen with delight to a roving Baptist, a stray Wesleyan, or a converted weaver. If you try to explain to them that in England some stress is laid on apostolic succession and episcopal ordination, and that Churchmen do not frequent Dissenting chapels, they stare at you as that strange monster a Puseyite: "What can these things matter so that the Gospel is preached?" will be their usual retort. Now we are quite convinced that if the Episcopalian Protestants of Ireland were compelled to support their own clergy, they would, in many cases, secede to the already established Dissenting chapels. The high opinion that even English Low Churchmen have of our Liturgy is not shared to any great extent by Irish Protestants. The Bible with them ranks far above the half-Puseyite Prayer Book; and "the Protestantism of the Protestant religion" is much more than half their faith. In fact, the Irish Protestant may be described as a man greatly attached to his religion, but indifferent to his Church in its spiritual character,—though proud of it and fond of it as a political establishment. And this characteristic of our fellow-religionists in Ireland is partly due to historical and partly to modern political causes. Under Charles II. Puritanism in England was well-nigh crushed; it was expelled from manse and glebe and mansion-house, from Parliament and the pulpit,—in fact, deprived of all official and popular power. But, in Ireland, the statesmen of the Restoration found Cromwell's ex-troopers so firmly fixed in their holdings, and making such a manful fight against the "mere Irish Papists," still detested even by English Tories, that they left them undisturbed. Thus, whoever won, the wretched Irish suffered loss. Cromwell confiscated the lands of Irish loyalists, and Charles II. did not restore them. Then the Penal Law made intense Protestantism a profitable faith for political and social advancement. So that there are more reasons than one for the fact that the Irish branch of the United Church is as little Papist or Puseyite as Lord Shaftesbury himself could desire. There is hardly a single Protestant in Ireland who would, like Keble, call the Church of Rome a "sister church." All Protestant sects, established, endowed, or unendowed, are united by a common bond of antagonism to the

Popery which is not, as in England, an obscure antagonist, but a present and formidable foe. It is, therefore, pretty certain that the Protestant Episcopal Church in Ireland would lose some of its adherents if all congregations had to support their clergy. Where there are no great differences of faith or feeling the cheaper forms of ecclesiastical ordinance would be sure to win. It is also, we think, pretty clear that the Irish Church, released from State control and deprived of its funds through Romanist agitation, would develop new theological bitterness towards the Roman Church. At present the position of a conscientious Protestant clergyman is rather hard. He is ordained, and accepts his position with the same unquestioning faith in the Church and in his calling that is possessed by an English clergyman of the same type. Yet from the moment he accepts a living, he finds by the newspapers that he is no mere minister—he becomes a political personage. He thinks naturally enough that "the errors of Popery" are soul-destroying; but if he acts on that belief, and tries to convert the Roman Catholics in his parish, he is held up to obloquy as "a man paid by the State to insult the Irish people." He thinks that all boys should be taught to read the Bible; if he carries out that theory in his school he is refused all Government aid, and as an opponent of national education has injured his chance of preferment. If he makes himself very vigorous in efforts to convert the Roman Catholics, he weakens his chance of a bishopric from those liberal Governments which partly depend on Roman Catholic support, and which have had the lion's share of political patronage during the last thirty-five years. It is, therefore, very probable that though stunned for the time by the loss of funds, Irish churchmen would revive to very vigorous life if once released from what Dr. Pusey calls "the fetters" of the State. They would become more and more aggressive against the Man of Sin.

In this connection it is rather curious to read the testimony of one of the very best of the Irish Roman Catholic prelates, Dr. Moriarty, Bishop of Kerry. In an anti-Fenian pastoral issued early last year, he states that Ireland has been "preserved from infidelity," and adds:—

"In accounting for this merciful preservation, we attribute much to the fact that, in all our polemical contests, a belief in Revelation, and in the Godhead of our Blessed Saviour, was assumed and supposed by the combatants on either side. The divinity of the Christian religion was not the battle-ground on either side. While Catholic and Protestant argued about Christ's authority, and about sacraments and sacrifices, all these united in belief of the inspiration of God's written word, of the great mysteries of the Incarnation, of the Redemption of Christ, of the judgment to come, and of the everlasting salvation. It could not, therefore, enter into the minds of the people to doubt these truths, which the rival champions of contending churches,

in all the fierceness and heat of controversy, never called in question. . . . . No testimony is stronger than that of witnesses between whom there is no possibility of collusion. Are we to throw away these advantages at the very time danger seems imminent again?"

Dr. Moriarty, it may be added, inclines to a compromise on the question,—an allotment of a portion of the funds of the Establishment—not to the payment of priests, but to the building of Roman Catholic churches and schools; and, from the whole tone of his discourse, it may be gathered that, though eager for ecclesiastical equality, however brought about, "either by levelling up or levelling down," he is not anxious for the disendowment of the Protestant Church. He, it will be seen in the following extract, lays some stress on the tranquillising effects of endowment, and half dreads the fiery zeal of unendowed ministers.

"It must be said—and we say it with pleasure, for we rejoice in all that is good—that, in every relation of life, the Protestant clergy who reside among us are not only blameless, but estimable and edifying. They are peaceful with all, and to their neighbours they are kind when they can; and we know that, on many occasions, they would be more active in beneficence, but that they do not wish to appear meddling, or incur the suspicion of tampering with poor Catholics. In bearing, in manner, in dress, they become their state. If they are not learned theologians, they are accomplished scholars and polished gentlemen. There is little intercourse between them and us, but they cannot escape our observation; and sometimes when we noticed that quiet and decorous and modest course of life, we felt ourselves giving expression to the wish,—talis cum sis utinam noster esses. Now, would it be convenient to force these men from their neutral and inoffensive position, and to make their antagonism a necessary condition of their existence? Would it be well to change the most unobtrusive parson into a fiery proselytising zealot? This seems worth consideration."

On the other hand it must be admitted that, amongst the Protestant laity, the political effect of utter abolition would be ultimately good. There would then be no permanent question on which Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants would be forced into antagonism, while there would remain many on which they could unite. The Protestants, no doubt, would lose a great deal of that rather Pharisaic loyalty which vaunts itself by pointing to the alleged disloyalty of that "publican yonder"—the Roman Catholic; but what we should gain would be an amount of union in Irish sentiment that would greatly simplify our legislation. We sometimes flatter ourselves that nothing but the firm, strong, impartial hand of English power prevents Ireland from becoming a scene of strife and blood; and that, if the English army were withdrawn, we should immediately see a war of religion and

races. "This was sometime a truth, but is now a paradox." It would be a severe satire on English Government to say that, after seven hundred years' rule, we have left the Irish nothing but savages, ready to fly at one anothers' throats the moment we should withdraw our Viceroy and our troops. It is forgotten that these very "wild Irish" are simply Englishmen, "with a difference," affected, no doubt, by a larger infusion of Celtic blood, affected by climate, affected by the peculiar politics of the island, affected on the one hand by Puritanism and on the other hand by Popery; but still much more like Englishmen than the planter of South Carolina was like the Yankee of Massachusetts. We point to the perpetual discord of class and sect in Ireland. But it is forgotten that the rival sects are like dogs fighting round their master for a bone. The whole fight is for our favour;—class and class quarrel because the one inherits the recollections and privileges of the dominance we gave it, while the other inherits memories of the past wrongs they suffered at our hands. The superior class is always fearing the withdrawal of their privileges, and the inferior always hoping for the satisfaction of their claims. We believe it is quite probable that the establishment of ecclesiastical equality in Ireland, however effected, so that the settlement should be final, would ultimately produce an amount of social and political unity we have never seen in that distracted land.

It will be seen that we anticipate increased Protestant vigour in the Irish Church if it were once released from State control. It may be asked, Would not that change add to the fire of religious hatred? In some cases no doubt it would. But it is curious to note that the Irish priests regard the attacks of un-Established Protestants with comparative good humour and contempt. Against the purely theological weapons of the Methodists or Presbyterians they wield with great effect their own armour of symbolism and spiritual appeal. But the parson of the parish is not only a priest, but a squire. He occupies the glebe-house, with its fifty or a hundred acres; he employs many men; he is often a kind, good-humoured, resident landlord; he is hand-and-glove with all the magistrates and gentry; his wife is charitable in the way of blankets and soup; he is himself a prosperous, pleasant, living embodiment of flourishing heresy. Even if, like some of the clergy of the Establishment, he never utters a word of controversy, his good acts, his useful influence, his very presence, are bulwarks of Protestantism; and his social superiority gives him great advantages over the much poorer priest, with much less influence with those "gentlemen" to whom poor Paddy is so often obliged to appeal for favour or gifts. It must be remembered that in many parts of Ireland there is no such thing as a Roman Catholic gentry, and that in many parishes, where the Catholic population, compared with the Protestants, is ninety-five to five, all the land is

owned by Protestant landlords. Acting on the principle that led to the establishment of a State Church, some of those conscientious Protestant landlords have "encouraged truth" and "discouraged error" by refusing to grant the Roman Catholics a site for a chapel. The refusal seems harsh; and yet if a State Church, supported because it is true, be right in principle, this refusal is also right. We are not aware whether, at the present day, any scrupulous Protestant proprietor is still able to deny the Papists the luxury of a roof, but within the last twenty years there have been many localities where the owners of the soil have refused a site. One instance is thus recorded in the "Freeman's Journal" of November 30, 1867, with reference to the parish of Carrigaholt, in the diocese of Killaloe. We are thus particular in our quotation, in the faint hope that some person may be able to deny the assertion:—

"It is not a score years since the people of the populous parish of Carrigaholt had, owing to the spirit with which the Penal Code imbued the landed proprietors of Ireland, to hear Mass in the open air in the street, a sentry-box on four wheels, veered according to the wind and weather, serving for the altar and the priest who ministered during the celebration—which primitive temple was familarly known as 'The Ark.' The priest and the altar were sheltered from the sun and from the storm, but the wealthiest as well the poorest Catholic in the parish had to kneel in the open street, the local proprietor persistently refusing a site for a Popish Church on the very soil from which the Catholics were expelled by his predecessors. The town contained in 1861 just two Anglicans, and 580 Catholics, and the whole parish 5,033 persons, of whom only 141 were not Catholics."

Thus in Ireland the territorial power of the Established clergy is aided by the territorial power of a Protestant landed class; and even in the great majority of cases where the owners of the soil exercise these rights with forbearance, the parson is, owing to his endowments and his connections with the State, one of the territorial aristocracy; and it is impossible for priests and peasants to forget that in the past struggles between race and race, and sect and sect, they have been the losers, and the Protestants the permanent victors and inheritors of the spoil. We cannot, even to gratify the Fenians, hand over the landed estates of private gentlemen to be divided amongst the tenants; but our grants to the clergy are more easily revocable, because they were made on public grounds in the hope that they would lead to the conversion of the "natives," and are only held for the life of the present possessors. By such revocation, partial or complete, the present results of past penal laws could be mitigated in every Irish parish.

To sum up the case as regards "utter abolition"—

1. It would establish ecclesiastical equality in Ireland, and so remove the religious element from politics.
2. It would release the conscientious Protestant clergy from the political control of the State, and add to their zeal against "Popery."
3. It would gratify the Roman Catholic clergy, and deprive them of a grievance against the State.
4. It would at first inflame Irish Protestants, but finally induce them, partly through resentment and partly through a new national feeling, to unite with Irishmen of other sects in demanding boons from the Government.
5. It could hardly be final or complete in its removal of religious discords, because the educational questions would still afford opportunities for the contests of rival sects for State endowments.
6. It would be full of difficulty as regards the allotment of the funds diverted from the Church: which, if given to education, would cause a renewed struggle of the rival schools.

It will be seen that there is a kind of balance of good and evil in the probable results. The desideratum is some adjustment that would secure the beneficial and avoid the evil results; and such adjustment is believed by many to lie in the equivalent endowment of the Roman Catholic Church; so that we should raise that to the level of the Establishment, not lower the other to a dependence on its own resources. The question remains, How is this to be done? The Roman Catholic Bishops declare that they will not accept any portion of the endowments of the Protestant Church; but they add their reasons; because their independence would be affected thereby. The obvious inference is, that if we could hit upon some plan of endowing that Church without making the priests direct yearly pensioners of the Crown, the problem would be solved. Is this impossible? Cardinal Cullen even now is willing to take any amount of money we offer him, so that we call it an endowment for the Catholic University; and surely English statesmanship is not so destitute of tact that it cannot devise some plan that will satisfy Peter without totally despoiling Paul.

There are several arguments on the Protestant side of the question which require consideration and reply. It is said that the Act of Union guarantees the existence of the Irish Church, because it declares that the Churches of England and Ireland are "united into one Protestant Episcopal Church, the government of which is to remain in force for ever." In the first place, the Act of Union in its entirety, or as regards any clause, is merely an Act of Parliament, to be repealed whenever Parliament pleases; and secondly, the letter of the Act would be fulfilled so long as we allow a spiritual connection between the Church of

England and its Irish branch. As to our right to redistribute its temporalities, that is unquestionable, and it has been already exercised: for instance, by the Church Temporalities Act of 1833 we "despoiled" Connaught of much surplus revenue, to be applied by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to the spiritual necessities of Ulster and Leinster, and by the Act of 1838 we handed over 25 per cent. of the Church property to the landlords, nominally as commission for collecting tithes, but virtually as a bribe. It is also said that on moral grounds we have no right to withdraw a grant once made to the Church. But this amounts to the assertion that if we appoint and pay a parson in a particular parish, we are bound to go on appointing and paying a parson in that locality for ever, and that under no circumstances whatever have we a right to hold our hand. For instance, if the one Protestant who forms the congregation of Nathlash were unhappily to die, it is contended that we still owe it to Scriptural truth, to missionary zeal, and to good faith, to fill up the next vacancy in the incumbency, to appoint a clerical gentleman at £200 a year to do no duty, and to keep on carefully repairing an empty church. In fact, this, our supposed duty, has been already fulfilled. In the same diocese that contains Nathlash,—or rather, correctly speaking, the united dioceses of Cork, Cloyne, and Ross,—we find that we pay £386 a year to the incumbent of Killaspugmullane,—little enough for accepting such a title,—but the parish contains no Protestants; we pay £179 a year to the incumbent of Aglishdrinagh, with no Protestants; £213 a year to the incumbent of Kilteskin, with no Protestants.

As we have said before, if we accept the principle that it is our duty to plant a Scriptural Church in a Popish land, at the expense of the benighted Papists, these and such like are the most interesting and important points of the "missionary field." Here "heathenism" most prevails; here there is most good work to be done, and we should be most proud of our perseverance in offering means of grace for several generations to these obstinately unconverted souls. On the contrary, if we declare, as some persons do, that the Established Church in Ireland is not missionary, and that its only raison d'être is its spiritual usefulness to Irish Protestants, we cut the ground from under its feet. For why should Papists pay for the spiritual advantages of Protestants? The only defensible theory of the Church is, that it was founded for all, that it is open to all, that all must pay for it, and that we ought to maintain a clergyman in every parish, even where there is not now a single Protestant, on a chance that some day Protestantism may creep in. Sydney Smith put the case with his usual felicity when he said:—"I have always compared the Protestant Church in Ireland to the institution of butchers' shops in all the villages of our Indian Empire." We will have a butcher's shop in every village, and you

Hindoos shall pay for it. We know that many of you do not eat meat at all, and that the sight of beefsteaks is particularly offensive to you; but still, as a stray European may pass through your village, and may want a steak or chop, the shop shall be established, and you shall pay for it. It is this theory that really justifies Nathlash.

It is also said on the Protestant side of the question that the Established Church clergyman is a resident gentleman who spends his income in Ireland, and in his own locality. That is quite true; and many of the clergy are active, useful, charitable men. But if we took half the parson's income from him, and gave it to the priest, the money would still be spent in the parish. And here we may notice the attacks sometimes personally made on Protestant rectors by Roman Catholic writers and speakers. They are denounced as dishonest because they accept tithes. Nothing can be more unjust. A Protestant clergyman has as good a right, morally or legally, to his income, as the clerk of the Crown, or the county surveyor; and if we "abolish his office" he has a right to compensation. Nor has a Roman Catholic any moral or legal right to refuse to pay tithes because they are applied by the State to Protestant uses. The question is one not of individual right, but of imperial policy, and we, the State, have a perfect right to reconsider the whole question, and, saving the vested interests of individuals, to arrange the whole system. The present county surveyor for Cork has no right, for instance, to insist that we shall maintain that office for ever, and that there shall always be a surveyor for that county, and the present incumbent of Nathlash has no right to say that it would be sacrilege if, on his death, we refused to appoint another man. It is entirely a matter within our discretion whether, on vacancies occurring, we appoint new men to the vacated offices, and whether we allot certain funds out of the imperial or local taxes for their support. The questions are, What useful public functions do they discharge? Do the majority of the taxpayers who support them derive benefit from their services? Are the general political results eminently satisfactory? Apply these questions to the Irish Church, and await the reply.

HAVERING ATTE BOWER.

"Havering Bower—a village in Essex, was a seat of some of our Saxon kings. Edward the Confessor took great delight in it, as being woody, solitary, and fit for devotion. It so abounded with nightingales, says the old legend, that they disturbed him in his devotions; he therefore earnestly prayed for their absence; since which time never nightingale was heard to sing in the park, but many without the pale, as in other places."—*Tour Round London*, 1796.

Pity, ye Saints! and send these birds away
I cannot meditate. I cannot pray.
Their ceaseless melody disturbs me so,
My visions now no longer heavenward go.
I murmur to the measure of their song
Ave and Credo as I pace along;
Matin and Vesper mingle with their notes,
And to the quivering of their restless throats
My footsteps on the flowery sward I beat.
They break the silence of this green retreat.
On them I put the wanderings of my soul,
The earth-born thoughts o'er which I've no control;—
Sinful emotions that o'erpower my will.
Pity, ye Saints! and bid the birds be still.

I wake and hear them singing in the night,
And when I pray that it may soon be light
Louder they anthem in the coming dawn!
And so my thoughts again are earthward drawn.
My priests are holy men, and say that these
Are not the "little angels of the trees,"
That sing like nuns amid the arbours dim
At morn and starry eve their welcome hymn,
But spirits of evil that have found their way
To Havering Bower to lead my soul astray,
Hiding amid the branches which o'erhead
At golden noonday a green twilight spread.
Oh, Mary, Mother! drive away the brood,
And let me kneel in peace before the rood,
Without a wandering thought. Oh! let me see
Thy Holy Son once more look down on me.

Do my priests play me false? At times I fear
It is my accusing conscience that I hear

In the sweet nightingale's low dying fall,
Bidding me back again my Edith call,—
My imprisoned queen, who weeps and prays for me,
On the bare floors of a grey nunnery.*
'Twas at this flowery season of the year,
When in her maidenhood I led her here,
And kneeling on this lawn of daisied green,
I rose not till she vowed to be my queen,
Sealing the oath with mutual entwine,
Her yielding lips close-bedding into mine.
The nightingales were singing all the time,
Bringing back Eden in its golden prime,
And then I swore, "If I am false to thee,
May those birds ever my accusers be."
They are—And ever have been night and day
Since from these bowers I banished thee away.

Why did I bring those Normans o'er the sea?
Why listen to their whispers against thee?
Unhappy hour! when I sent thee away
To weep and pine amid those cloisters grey.
Ever those words the nightingales still sing,
Ever their burthen is, "Deluded king,
Go fetch her back all royally arrayed,
She was the sunshine of this leafy shade.
Blind king, she was the sweetest Saxon flower
We ever sung to sleep in Havering Bower.
Then shalt thou hear again the songs we sung,
When like a pearl upon thy breast she hung.
Then shall thy fettered soul have free release,
And while thou prayest our loud singing cease."
For so I shape their songs that fill the air,
So syllable their notes amid my prayer;
So are they backward by my conscience driven
When e'er I try to turn my thoughts to heaven.
The words turn prick-song notes, and mock the creed
Which in my missal I attempt to read;
And in the illumined pictures of the saints
My pure-souled Edith fancy ever paints;—
Her likeness in the image only trace
While gazing on the holy Mary's face.
I dare not bring her back, for my priests say
Her eyes will further lead my soul astray.

* Queen Edith, daughter of Earl Godwin. When Edward banished the brave Saxon and his sons, he shut his queen up in a nunnery.

Birds are God's messengers, and they may bring
Evil or good to an annointed king.
Soaring on dusky wings, the ravens cried
All through the night on which King Canute died.
And ever to their heavenly mission true,
At night and morning they came into view
Of Cherith's brook, to bring Elijah food.
And I have felt, while kneeling at the rood,
It was by birds that things were oft foretold
To kings and seers in the days of old.
So have I heard the nightingales that sing,
Shaping their notes to name the coming king,
And I have started from my sleep profound
Fancying I heard his Nórman trumpets sound;
And dimly in the troubled dreams of night
I've seen him on this island shore alight,
And Edith weeping on the sea-ribbed strand
Holding her brother Harold's blood-stained hand.
And all the while the nightingales did sing,
"Woe, woe, to England when the Norman's king."
These prophets of ill-omen send away,
Ye saints, that I in peace may once more pray.

My widowed mother married to the Dane,
Allowed the sons she bore Canute to reign,
Though I was heir to Saxon Ethelred,
And born ere she the stormy Sea-king wed.
But I was banished from my native land,
And friendless left without a guiding hand.
Brought back, they placed me on my father's throne;
My subjects strangers, I a king unknown.
They spoke with bated breath of Ethelred,
As one 'twere best the least of him were said,—
A coward who brought out his golden hoard
To meet the Danes, and left behind his sword.
Nor could Earl Godwin and his sons forbear
From whisperings of him in each other's ear,
Though he is father to my ill-starred queen,
Telling of what my mother once had been.

Weary and sad of heart I wander here
In this sweet season of the flowery year,
While every breeze that fieldward has been straying
Comes scented back like girls that have been Maying.
And in the chase I now find no delight,
My hounds crouch round me with the deer in sight.

My hawk sits moping in the silent mews
Eyeing the quarry he no more pursues.
My horses listless crop the vernal grass,
And never whinny at me when I pass.
For when I wander o'er these flowery meads
I mourn and meditate, and tell my beads,
And to the saints all day and night I pray
To drive from me the nightingales away ;—
Pray that their music may not haunt me so,
Causing my wavering thoughts to come and go ;
While every eddy of the shifting air
Sends forth their voices and beats back my prayer,
Like smoke which low-hung clouds do downward bend,
While it is ever struggling to ascend.

Hear me, ye saints ! I vow that holy pile
The heathen Danes destroyed on Thorney Isle*
I will rebuild, to gladden future eyes,
So stately shall the sacred structure rise,
If ye will drive the nightingales from here,
And let them never more in Havering Bower appear.

The prayer was answered, saintly legends tell,
Silent was every glade and bowery dell,
Though near nine hundred times the snow-white May
Bore crimson berries since they went away,
Yet never once when Spring came back to flower
Came nightingale with her to Havering Bower.

And ere Time's hand the abbey-tomb defaced
Might on it sculptured nightingales be traced,
With open beak, deep-throated, and raised breast,
As if they still were singing him to rest ;
So have we fancied oft when listening there
While the sweet anthem sounded low and clear.

T. M.

* The Island of Thorns was the old Saxon name of Westminster long before an abbey was erected.

PAUL GOSSLETT'S CONFESSIONS

IN

LOVE, LAW, AND THE CIVIL SERVICE.

MY FIRST MISSION UNDER F.O.

I was walking very sadly across the Green Park one day, my hat pressed over my eyes, not looking to right or left, but sauntering slowly along, depressed and heavy-hearted, when I felt a friendly arm slip softly within my own, while a friendly voice said—

"I think I have got something to suit you, for a few months at least. Don't you know Italian?"

"In a fashion, I may say I do. I can read the small poets, and chat a little. I'll not say much more about my knowledge."

"Quite enough for what I mean. Now tell me another thing. You're not a very timid fellow I know. Have you any objection to going amongst the brigands in Calabria,—on a friendly mission, of course,—where it will be their interest to treat you well?"

"Explain yourself a little more freely. What is it I should have to do?"

"Here's the whole affair; the son of a wealthy baronet, a Wiltshire M.P., has been captured and carried off by these rascals. They demand a heavy sum for his ransom, and give a very short time for the payment. Sir Joseph, the youth's father, is very ill, and in such a condition as would make any appeal to him highly dangerous; the doctors declare, in fact, it would be fatal; and Lady Mary S. has come up to town, in a state bordering on distraction, to consult Lord Scatterdale, the Foreign Secretary, who is a personal friend of her husband. The result is that his lordship has decided to pay the money at once; and the only question is now to find the man to take it out and treat with these scoundrels."

"That ought not to be a very difficult matter, one would say; there are scores of fellows with pluck for such a mission."

"So there are, if pluck were the only requisite; but something more is needed. If Sir Joseph should not like to acknowledge the debt,—if, on his recovery, he should come to think that the affair might have been better managed, less cost incurred, and so on,—the Government will feel embarrassed; they can't well quarrel with an old supporter; they can't well stick the thing in the estimates;

so that, to cover the outlay in some decent fashion, they must give it a public-service look before they can put it into the Extraordinaries; and so Lord S. has hit upon this scheme. You are aware that a great question is now disputed between the Bourbonists of Naples and the party of New Italy,—whether brigandage means mere highway robbery, or is the outburst of national enthusiasm in favour of the old dynasty. The friends of King Bomba, of course, call it a 'La Vendée;' the others laugh at this, and say that the whole affair is simply assassination and robbery, and totally destitute of any political colouring. Who knows on which side the truth lies, or whether some portion of truth does not attach to each of these versions? Now, there are, as you said awhile ago, scores of fellows who would have pluck enough to treat with the brigands; but there are not so many who could be trusted to report of them,—to give a clear and detailed account of what he saw of them,—of their organisation, their sentiments, their ambitions, and their political views, if they have any. You are just the man to do this. You have that knack of observation and that readiness with your pen which are needed. In fact, you seem to me the very fellow to do this creditably."

"Has Lord S. any distinct leanings in the matter?" asked I. "Does he incline to regard these men as political adherents, or as assassins 'purs et simples'?"

"I see what you mean," said my friend, pinching my arm. "You want to know the tone of your employer before you enter his service. You'd like to be sure of the tints that would please him."

"Perhaps so. I won't go so far as to say it would frame my report, but it might serve to tinge it. Now, do you know his proclivities, as Jonathan would call them?"

"I believe they are completely with the Italian view of the matter. I mean, he will not recognise anything political in these scoundrels."

"I thought as much. Now as to the appointment. Do you think you could obtain it for me?"

"You are ready to take it, then?"

"Perfectly."

"And ready to start at once?"

"To-night."

"Come back with me now, and I will inquire if Lord S. will see us. He spoke to me yesterday evening on the matter, and somehow your name did not occur to me, and I certainly recommended another man;—Hitchins, of the Daily News; but I'm sure he will not have sent for him yet, and that we shall be in good time."

As we walked back towards Downing Street my friend talked on incessantly about the advantages I might derive from doing this thing creditably. They were sure to make a Blue Book out of my report, and who knows if my name would not be mentioned in the House? At all events, the newspapers would have it; and the Government

would be obliged,—they couldn't help giving me something. "You'll have proved yourself a man of capacity," said he, "and that's enough. S. does like smart fellows under him, he is so quick himself; sees a thing with half an eye, and reads men just as he reads a book." He rattled along in this fashion, alternately praising the great man and assuring me that I was exactly the sort of fellow to suit him. "He'll not burden you with instructions, but what he tells you will be quite sufficient; he is all clearness, conciseness, and accuracy. There's only one caution I have to give you,—don't ask him a question, follow closely all he says, and never ask him to explain anything that puzzles you. To suppose that he has not expressed himself clearly is a dire offence, mind that; and now here we are. Crosby, is my lord upstairs?" asked he of the porter; and receiving a bland nod in reply, he led the way to the Minister's cabinet.

"I'll ask to see him first myself," whispered he, as he sent in his card.

Now, though my friend was an M.P. and a staunch supporter of the party, he manifested a considerable amount of anxiety and uneasiness when waiting for the noble secretary's reply. It came at last.

"Can't possibly see you now, sir. Will meet you at the House at five o'clock."

"Will you kindly tell his lordship I have brought with me the gentleman I spoke to him about yesterday evening? He will know for what."

The private secretary retired, sullenly, and soon returned to say, "The gentleman may come in; my lord will speak to him."

The next moment I found myself standing in a comfortably-furnished room, in front of a large writing-table, at which an elderly man with a small head, scantily covered with grey hair, was writing. He did not cease his occupation as I entered, nor notice me in any manner as I approached, but went on repeating to himself certain words as he wrote them; and at last, laying down his pen, said aloud, with a faint chuckle, "And your Excellency may digest it how you can."

I gave a very slight cough. He looked up, stared at me, arose, and, walking to the fire, stood with his back to it for a couple of seconds without speaking. I could see that he had some difficulty in dismissing the topic which had just occupied him, and was only arriving at me by very slow stages and heavy roads.

"Eh!" said he, at last; "you are the man of the paper. Not the Times—but the—the—what's it?"

"No, my lord. I'm the other man," said I, quietly.

"Ah, you're the other man." And as he spoke, he hung his head, and seemed hopelessly lost in thought. "Have you seen Mr. Hammil?" asked he.

"No, my lord."

"You must see Mr. Hammil. Till you see Mr. Hammil, you needn't come to me."

"Very well, my lord," said I, moving towards the door.

"Wait a moment. You know Italy well, I am told. Do you know Cavour?"

"No, my lord," said I.

"Ah! They say he over-eats; have you heard that?"

"I can't say that I have, my lord; but my acquaintance with Italy and with Italians is very slight indeed."

"Why did they recommend you, then, for this affair? I told Gresson that I wanted a man who could have ready access to their public men, who knew Balbi, Gino Capponi, Ricasoli, and the rest of them. Now, sir, how is it possible, without intimacy with these men and their opinions, that you could write such leading articles as I suggested in their papers? How could you ever get admission to the columns of the 'Opinione' and the 'Perseveranza,' eh? Answer me that."

"I am afraid, my lord, there is some grave misunderstanding here. I never dreamed of proposing myself for such a difficult task. I came here on a totally different mission. It was to take your lordship's orders about the ransom and rescue of a young Englishman who has been captured by the brigands in Southern Italy——"

"That scamp St. John. A very different business, indeed. Why, sir, they value him at one thousand pounds, and I'll venture to assert that his friends,—if that be the name of the people who know him,—would call him a dear bargain at twenty. I'm certain his own father would say so; but, poor fellow, he is very ill, and can't talk on this or any other matter just now. Lady Mary, however, insists on his release, and we must see what can be done. You know the habits and ways of these rascals,—these brigands—don't you?"

"No, my lord; nothing whatever about them."

"Then, in Heaven's name, sir, what do you know?"

"Very little about anything, my lord, I must confess; but as I am sorely pushed to find a livelihood, and don't fancy being a burden to my friends, I told Mr. Gresson this morning that I was quite ready to undertake the mission if I should be intrusted with it; and that, so far as bail or security went, my uncle Rankin, of Rankin and Bates, would unquestionably afford it."

"Ah, this is very different indeed," said he, ponderingly, and with a look of compassionate interest I had not thought his face capable of. "Gone too fast, perhaps; have been hit hard at Doncaster or Goodwood?"

"No, my lord; I never betted. I started with a few thousand pounds and lost them in a speculation."

"Well, well. I have no right to enter into these things. Go and see Mr. Temple, the financial clerk. Take this to him, and see what

he says to you. If he is satisfied, come down to the House to-night. But stay! You ought to start this evening, oughtn't you?"

"I believe, my lord, the time is very short. They require the money to be paid by the twelfth."

"Or they'll cut his ears off, I suppose," said he, laughing. "Well, he's an ugly dog already; not that cropping will improve him. Here, take this to Temple, and arrange the matter between you."

And he hurriedly wrote half a dozen lines, which he enclosed and addressed, and then returning to his seat, said, "Bonne Chance! I wish you success and a pleasant journey."

I will not dwell upon the much longer and more commonplace interview that followed. Mr. Temple knew all about me,—knew my uncle, and knew the whole story of my misfortunes. He was not, however, the less cautious in every step he took; and as the sum to be entrusted to me was so large, he filled in a short bail-bond, and, while I sat with him, despatched it by one of his clerks to Lombard Street, for my uncle's signature. This came in due time; and, furnished with instructions how to draw on the Paymaster-General, some current directions how to proceed till I presented myself at the Legation at Naples, and a sum sufficient for the travelling expenses, I left London that night for Calais, and began my journey. If I was very anxious to acquit myself creditably in this my first employment in the public service, and to exhibit an amount of zeal, tact, and discretion that might recommend me for future employment, I was still not indifferent to the delights of a journey paid for at the Queen's expense, and which exacted from me none of those petty economies which mar the perfect enjoyment of travelling.

If I suffer myself to dwell on this part of my history I shall be ruined, for I shall never get on; and you will, besides, inevitably,—and as unjustly as inevitably,—set me down for a snob.

I arrived at Naples at last. It was just as the day was closing in, but there was still light enough to see the glorious bay and the outline of Vesuvius in the background. I was, however, too full of my mission now to suffer my thoughts to wander to the picturesque, and so I made straight for the Legation.

I had been told that I should receive my last instructions from H.M.'s Minister, and it was a certain Sir James Magruder that then held that office at Naples. I know so very little of people in his peculiar walk, that I can only hope he may not be a fair sample of his order, for he was the roughest, the rudest, and most uncourteous gentleman it has ever been my fortune to meet.

He was dressing for dinner when I sent up my card, and at once ordered that I should be shown up to his room.

"Where's your bag?" cried he roughly, as I entered.

Conceiving that this referred to my personal luggage, and was meant as the preliminary to inviting me to put up at his house, I said

that I had left my "traps" at the hotel, and, with his permission, would instal myself there for the few hours of my stay.

"Confound your 'traps,' as you call them," said he. "I meant your despatches,—the bag from F.O. Ain't you the messenger?"

"No, sir; I am not the messenger," said I, haughtily.

"And what the devil do you mean, then, by sending me your card, and asking to see me at once?"

"Because my business is peremptory, sir," said I, boldly, and proceeded at once to explain who I was, and what I had come for. "To-morrow will be the tenth, sir," said I, "and I ought to be at Rocco d'Anco by the morning of the twelfth at farthest."

He was brushing his hair all the time I was speaking, and I don't think that he heard above half of what I said.

"And do you mean to tell me they are such infernal fools at F. O. that they're going to pay one thousand pounds sterling to liberate this scamp St. John?"

"I think, sir, you will find that I have been sent out with this object."

"Why, it's downright insanity! It is a thousand pities they hadn't caught the fellow years ago. Are you aware that there's scarcely a crime in the statute-book he has not committed? I'd not say murder wasn't amongst them. Why, sir, he cheated me,—me,—the man who now speaks to you,—at billiards. He greased my cue, sir. It was proved,—proved beyond the shadow of a doubt. The fellow called it a practical joke, but he forgot I had five ducats on the game; and he had the barefaced insolence to amuse Naples by a representation of me as I sided my ball, and knocked the marker down afterwards, thinking it was his fault. He was attached, this St. John was, to my mission here at the time; but I wrote home to demand,—not to ask, but demand,—his recall. His father's vote was, however, of consequence to the Government, and they refused me. Yes, sir, they refused me; they told me to give him a leave of absence if I did not like to see him at the Legation; and I gave it, sir. And, thank Heaven, the fellow went into Calabria, and fell into the hands of the brigands,—too good company for him, I'm certain. I'll be shot if he couldn't corrupt them; and now you're come out here to pay a ransom for a fellow that any other country but England would send to the galleys."

"Has he done nothing worse, sir," asked I, timidly, "than this stupid practical joke?"

"What, sir, have you the face to put this question to me,—to H.M.'s Minister at this court,—the subject of this knavish buffoonery? Am I a fit subject for a fraud,—a—a freedom, sir? Is it to a house which displays the royal arms over the entrance-door men come to play blackleg or clown? Where have you lived;—with whom have you lived;—what pursuit in life have you followed,—that you

should be sunk in such utter ignorance of all the habits of life and civilisation?"

I replied that I was a gentleman, I trusted as well educated, and I knew as well born, as himself.

He sprang to the bell as I said this, and rang on till the room was crowded with servants, who came rushing in under the belief that it was a fire alarm.

"Take him away,—put him out,—Giacomo,—Hippolyte,—Francis!" screamed he. "See that he's out of the house this instant. Send Mr. Carlyon here. Let the police be called, and order gendarmes if he resists."

While he was thus frothing and foaming I took my hat, and passing quietly through the ranks of his household, descended the stairs, and proceeded into the street.

I reached the "Vittoria" in no bland humour. I must own that I was flurried and irritated in no common degree. I was too much excited to be able clearly to decide how far the insult I had received required explanation and apology, or if it had passed the limits in which apology is still possible.

Perhaps, thought I, if I call him out he'll hand me over to the police; perhaps he'll have me sent over the frontier. Who knows what may be the limit to a Minister's power? While I was thus speculating and canvassing with myself, a card was presented to me by the waiter—"Mr. Sponnington, Attaché, H.M.'s Legation, Naples," and as suddenly the owner of it entered the room.

He was a fair-faced, blue-eyed young man, very short-sighted, with a faint lisp and an effeminate air. He bowed slightly as he came forward, and said, "You're Mr. Gosslett, ain't you?" And not waiting for any reply, he sat down and opened a roll of papers on the table. "Here are your instructions. You are to follow them when you can, you know, and diverge from them whenever you must. That is, do whatever you like, and take the consequences. Sir James won't see you again. He says you insulted him, but he says that of almost every one. The cook insults him when the soup is too salt, and I insulted him last week by writing with pale ink. But you'd have done better if you'd got on well with him. He writes home—do you understand?—he writes home."

"So do most people," I said, drily.

"Ah! but not the way he does. He writes home and has a fellow black-listed. Two crosses against you sends you to Greece, and three is ruin! Three means the United States."

"I assure you, sir, that as regards myself your chief's good opinion or good word are matters of supreme indifference."

Had I uttered an outrageous blasphemy, he could not have looked at me with greater horror.

"Well," said he at last, "there it is; read it over. Bolton will

cash your bills, and give you gold. You must have gold; they'll not take anything else. I don't believe there is much more to say."

"Were you acquainted with Mr. St. John?" asked I.

"I should think I was. Rodney-St. John and I joined together."

"And what sort of fellow is he? Is he such a scamp as his chief describes?"

"He's fast, if you mean that; but we're all fast."

"Indeed!" said I, measuring him with a look, and thinking to compute the amount of his colleague's iniquity.

"But he's not worse than Stormont, or Mosely, or myself; only he's louder than we are. He must always be doing something no other fellow ever thought of. Don't you know the kind of thing I mean? He wants to be original. Bad style that, very. That's the way he got into this scrape. He made a bet he'd go up to Rocco d'Anco, and pass a week with Stoppa, the brigand—the cruellest dog in Calabria. He didn't say when he'd come back again, though; and there he is still, and Stoppa sent one of his fellows to drop a letter into the Legation, demanding twenty-five thousand francs for his release, or saying that his ears, nose, &c., will be sent on by instalments during the month. Ugly, ain't it?"

"I trust I shall be in time to save him. I suspect he's a good fellow."

"Yes, I suppose he is," said he, with an air of uneasiness; "only I'd not go up there, where you're going, for a trifle, I tell you that."

"Perhaps not," said I, quietly.

"For," resumed he, "when Stoppa sees that you're a nobody, and not worth a ransom, he'd as soon shoot you as look at you." And this thought seemed to amuse him so much that he laughed at it as he quitted the room and descended the stairs, and I even heard him cackling over it in the street.

Before I went to bed that night I studied the map of Calabria thoroughly, and saw that by taking the diligence to Atri the next day, I should reach Valdenone by about four o'clock, from which a guide could conduct me to Rocco d' Anco—a mountain walk of about sixteen miles,—a feat which my pedestrian habits made me fully equal to. If the young attaché's attempt to terrorise over me was not a perfect success, I am free to own that my enterprise appeared to me a more daring exploit than I had believed it when I thought of it in Piccadilly. It was not merely that I was nearer to the peril, but everything conspired to make me more sensible to the danger. The very map, where a large tract was marked "little known," suggested a terror of its own; and I fell asleep at last, to dream of every wild incident of brigand life I had seen in pictures or witnessed on the stage.

As that bland young gentleman so candidly told me, I was a "no-

body," and consequently of no interest to any one. Who would think of sending out an express messenger to ransom Paul Gosslett? At all events I could console myself with the thought, that if the world would give little for me, it would grieve even less; and with this not very cheering consolation I mounted to the banquette of the diligence, and started.

After passing through a long, straggling suburb, not remarkable for anything but its squalor and poverty, we reached the sea-shore, and continued to skirt the bay for miles. I had no conception of anything so beautiful as the great sheet of blue water seen in the freshness of a glorious sunrise, with the white-sailed luggers skimming silently along, and reflected, as if in a mirror, on the unruffled surface. There was a peaceful beauty in all around, that was a positive enchantment, and the rich odours of the orange and the verbena filled the air almost to a sense of delicious stupefaction. Over and over did I say to myself, "Why cannot this delicious dream be prolonged for a lifetime? If existence could but perpetuate such a scene as this, let me travel along the shore of such a sea, overshadowed by the citron and the vine,—I ask for no more." The courier or conductor was my only companion,—an old soldier of the first empire, who had fought on the Beresina and in Spain,—a rough old sabreur, not to be appeased, by my best cigars and my brandy-flask, into a good word for the English. He hated them formerly, and he hated them still. There might be, he was willing to believe, one or two of the race that were not cani; but he hadn't met them himself, nor did he know any one who had. I relished his savagery, and somehow never felt in the slightest degree baffled or amazed by his rudeness. I asked him if he had heard of that unlucky countryman of mine who had been captured by the brigands, and he said that he had heard that Stoppa meant to roast him alive, for that Stoppa didn't like the English,—a rather strong mode of expressing a national antipathy, but one, on the whole, he did not entirely disapprove of.

"Stoppa, however," said I, assuming as a fact what I meant for a question,—"Stoppa is a man of his word. If he offered to take a ransom, he'll keep his promise?"

"That he will, if the money is paid down in zecchin gold. But take nothing else. He'll give up the man; but I'd not fancy being the fellow who brought the ransom, if there was a light piece in the mass."

"He'd surely respect the messenger who carried the money?"

"Just as much as I respect that old mare who won't come up to her collar;" and he snatched the whip as he spoke from the driver, and laid a heavy lash over the sluggish beast's loins. "Look here," said he to me, as we parted company at Corallo, "you're not bad—for an Englishman, at least,—and I'd rather you didn't come to trouble. Don't you get any further into these mountains than we

Andrea, and don't stay even there too long. Don't go in Stoppa's way; for if you have money, he'll cut your throat for it, and if you haven't, he'll smash your skull for being without it. I'll be on the way back to Naples on Saturday, and if you'll take a friend's advice you'll be beside me."

I was not sorry to get away from my old grumbling companion; but his words of warning went with me in the long evening's drive up to St. Andrea, a wild mountain road, over which I jogged in a very uncomfortable barroccino.

Was I really rushing into such peril as he described? And if so, why so? I could scarcely affect to believe that any motives of humanity moved me;—still less any sense of personal regard or attachment. I had never known—not even seen—Mr. St. John. In what I had heard of him there was nothing that interested me. It was true that I expected to be rewarded for my services; but if there was actual danger in what I was about to do, what recompense would be sufficient? And was it likely that this consideration would weigh heavily on the minds of those who employed me? Then, again, this narrative, or report, or whatever it was, how was I to find the material for it? Was it to be imagined that I was to familiarise myself with brigand life by living amongst these rascals, so as to be able to make a Blue Book about them? Was it believed that I could go to them, like a census commissioner, and ask their names and ages, how long they had been in their present line of life, and how they throve on it? I'll not harass myself more about them, thought I at last. I'll describe my brigand as I find him. The fellow who comes to meet me for the money shall be the class. "Ex pede Herculem" shall serve one here, and I have no doubt I shall be as accurate as the others who contribute to this sort of literature.

I arrived at St. Andrea as the Angelus was ringing, and saw that pretty sight of a whole village on their knees at evening prayer, which would have been prettier had not the devotees been impressed with the most rascally countenances I ever beheld.

From St. Andrea to Rocco was a walk of seventeen miles, but I was not sorry to exchange the wearisome barroccino I had been jolting in for the last six hours, for my feet, and after a light meal of bread and onions, washed down with a very muddy imitation of vinegar, I set forth with a guide for my destination. There was not much companionship in my conductor, who spoke a patois totally unintelligible to me, and who could only comprehend by signs. His own pantomime, however, conveyed to me that we were approaching the brigand region, and certain significant gestures about his throat and heart intimated to me that sudden death was no unusual casualty in these parts. An occasional rude cross erected on the roadside, or a painted memorial on the face of a rock, would also attest some bygone disaster, at the sight of which he invariably knelt and uttered a

prayer, on rising from which he seemed to me each time but half decided whether he would accompany me farther.

At last, after a four hours' hard walk, we gained the crest of a mountain ridge, from which the descent seemed nearly precipitous, and here my companion showed me by the faint moonlight a small heap of stones, in the midst of which a stake was placed upright; he muttered some words in a very low tone, and held up eight fingers, possibly to convey that eight people had been murdered or buried in that place. Whatever the idea, one thing was certain,—he would go no farther. He pointed to the zigzag path I was to follow, and stretched out his hand to show me, as I supposed, where Rocco lay, and then unslinging from his shoulder the light carpet-bag he had hitherto carried for me, he held out his palm for payment.

I resolutely refused, however, to accept his resignation, and ordered him by a gesture to resume his load and march on, but the fellow shook his head doggedly, and pointed with one finger to the open palm of the other hand. The gesture was defiant and insolent, and as we were man to man, I felt it would be an ignominy to submit to him, so I again showed signs of refusal, and pointed to the bag. At this he drew a long thin-bladed knife from his garter, but as quickly I pulled out a revolver from my breast-pocket. The fellow's sharp ear caught the click of the lock, and with a spring he darted over the low parapet and disappeared. I never saw him more.

A cold sweat broke over me as I took up my burden and resumed my way. There was but one path, so that I could not hesitate as to the road, but I own that I began that descent with a heart-sinking and a terror that I have no words to convey. That the fellow would spring out upon me at some turn of the way seemed so certain, that at each sharp angle I halted and drew breath for the struggle I thought was coming. My progress was thus much retarded, and my fatigue greatly increased. The day broke at last, but found me still plodding on in a dense pine-wood which clothed the lower sides of the mountain. In addition to my carpet-bag I had the heavy belt in which the gold pieces were secured, and the weight of which became almost insupportable.

What inconceivable folly had ever involved me in such an adventure? How could I have been so weak as to accept such a mission? Here was I, more than a thousand miles away from home, alone on foot in the midst of a mountain tract, the chosen resort of the worst assassins of Europe, and, as if to insure my ruin, with a large sum in gold on my person. What could my friend have meant by proposing the enterprise to me? Did he imagine the mountain-paths of the Basilicata were like Pall Mall? or did he,—and this seemed most likely,—did he deem that the man who had so little to live for must necessarily care less for life? If I must enter the public service,

thought I, at the peril of my neck, better to turn to some other means of living. Then I grew sardonic and malicious, declaring to myself how like a rich man it was to offer such an employment to a poor man, as though, when existence had so little to charm, one could not hold to it with any eagerness. The people, muttered I, who throw these things to us so contemptuously are careful enough of themselves. You never find one of them risk his life, no, nor even peril his health, in any enterprise.

As the sun shone out and lit up a magnificent landscape beneath me, where, in the midst of a wooded plain, a beautiful lake lay stretched out, dotted over with little islands, I grew in better humour with myself and with the world at large. It was certainly very lovely. The snow-peaks of the Abruzzi could be seen here and there topping the clouds, which floated lightly up from the low-lying lands of the valley. Often and often had I walked miles and miles to see a scene not fit to be compared with this. If I had only brought my colours with me what a bit of landscape I might have carried away. The pencil could do nothing where so much depended on tint and glow. A thin line of blue smoke rose above the trees near the lake, and this I guessed to proceed from the village of Rocco d' Anco. I plucked up my courage at the sight, and again set forth, weary and foot-sore it is true, but in a cheerier, heartier spirit than before.

Four hours' walking, occasionally halting for a little rest, brought me to Rocco, a village of about twenty houses, straggling up the side of a vine-clad hill, the crest of which was occupied by a church. The population were all seated at their doors, it being some festa, and were, I am bound to admit, about as ill-favoured a set as one would wish to see. In the aspect of the men, and indeed still more in that of the women, one could at once recognise the place as a brigand resort. There were, in the midst of all the signs of squalor and poverty, rich scarfs and costly shawls to be seen; while some of the very poorest wore gold chains round their necks, and carried handsomely ornamented pistols and daggers at their waist-belts. I may as well mention here, not to let these worthy people be longer under a severe aspersion than needful, that they were not themselves brigands, but simply the friends and partisans of the gangs, who sold them the different spoils of which they had divested the travellers. The village was in fact little else than the receptacle of stolen goods until opportunity offered to sell them elsewhere. I had been directed to put up at a little inn kept by an ex-friar who went by the name of Fra Bartolo, and I soon found the place a very pleasant contrast, in its neatness and comfort, to the dirt and wretchedness around it. The Frate, too, was a fine, jovial, hearty-looking fellow, with far more the air of a Sussex farmer in his appearance than a Calabrian peasant. He set me at ease at once by saying

that of course I came for the fishing, and added that the lake was in prime order and the fish plenty. This was said with such palpable roguery that I saw it was meant for the bystanders, and knew at once he had been prepared for my arrival and expected me. I was, however, more in need of rest and refreshment than of conversation, and after a hearty but hurried meal I turned in and fell off to sleep as I had never slept before. Twice or thrice I had a faint consciousness that attempts were made to awaken me, and once that a candle was held close to my eyes, but these were very confused and indistinct sensations, and my stupor soon conquered them.

"That's pretty well for a nap. Just nine hours of it," said the Frate, as he jogged my shoulder and insisted on arousing me.

"I was so tired," said I, stretching myself, and half turning to the wall for another bout.

"No, no; you mustn't go to sleep again," said he, bending over me. "He's come," and he made a gesture with his thumb towards an adjoining room. "He's been there above an hour."

"Do you mean——"

"Hush!" he said cautiously. "We name no names here. Get up and see him; he never likes loitering down in these places. One can't be sure of everybody in this world." And here he threw up his eyes, and seemed for a moment overwhelmed at the thought of human frailty and corruption.

"He is expecting me then?" said I.

"Very impatiently, sir. He wanted to arouse you when he arrived, and he has been twice in here to see if you were really asleep."

Something like a thrill ran through me to think that, as I lay there, this brigand, this man of crimes and bloodshed,—for of course he was such,—had stood by my bedside, and bent over me. The Frate, however, urging me to activity, left me no time for these reflections, and I arose quickly and followed him. I was eager to know what manner of man it was to whom I was about to make my approach; but I was hurried along a passage, and half pushed into a room, and the door closed behind me, before I had time for a word.

On a low settle-bed, just in front of me, as I entered, a man lay smoking a short meerschaum, whose dress and get up, bating some signs of wear and ill-usage, would have made the fortune of a small theatre. His tall hat was wreathed with white roses, from the midst of which a tall feather, spray-like and light, stood up straight. His jacket of bright green, thrown open wide, displayed a scarlet waistcoat perfectly loaded with gold braiding. Leather breeches, ending above the knee, showed the great, massive limb beneath to full advantage; while the laced stocking that came up to the calf served on one side as belt for a stiletto, whose handle was entirely incrusted with precious stones. "You are a good sleeper, Signor Inglese," said he, in a pleasant, richly-toned voice, "and I feel sorry to have disturbed you."

This speech was delivered with all the ease and courtesy of a man accustomed to the world. "You may imagine, however, that I cannot well delay in places like this. Rocco, I believe, is very friendly to me, but where there are three hundred people there may easily be three traitors."

I assented, and added that from what Fra Bartolo had told me, neither he nor his had much to fear in those parts.

"I believe so, too," added he, caressing his immense moustache, which came down far below his chin on either side. "We have between us the best bond of all true friendship,—we need each other. You have brought the ransom in gold, I hope?"

"Yes; in gold of the English mint, too."

"I'd rather have our own. The zecchin has less alloy than your coin, and as what we take generally goes into the crucible, the distinction is of value."

"If I had only known——"

"Never mind. It is too late now to think of it. Let us conclude the matter, for I wish to be away by daybreak."

I unfastened my waist-belt, and opening a secret spring, poured forth a mass of bright sovereigns on the table.

"I have such perfect reliance in your honour, signor," said I, "that I make no conditions—I ask no questions. That you will at once release my countryman, I do not doubt for an instant."

"He is already at liberty," said he, as he continued to pile the coin in little heaps of ten each. "Every step you took since you arrived at Naples was known to me. I knew the moment you came, the hotel you stopped at, the visit you paid to your minister, the two hours passed in the Bank, your departure in the diligence; and the rascal you engaged for a guide came straight to me after he left you. My police, signor mio, is somewhat better organised than Count Cavour's," said he, with a laugh.

The mention of the Count's name reminded me at once to sound him on politics, and see if he, and others like him, in reality interested themselves as partisans on either side.

"Of course," said he, "we liked the old dynasty better than the present people. A splendid court and a brilliant capital attracted strangers from all quarters of Europe. Strangers visited Capri, Amalfi, Pœstum; they went here, and there, and everywhere. And they paid for their pleasures like gentlemen. The officials, too, of those days were men with bowels, who knew every one must live. What have we now? Piedmontese dogs, who are not Italians; who speak no known tongue, and who have no other worship than the house of Savoy."

"Might I venture to ask," said I, obsequiously, "how is it that I find a man of your acquirements and ability in such a position as this?"

"Because I like this life better than that of an 'Impiegato' with five hundred ducats a year! Perhaps I don't follow it all from choice. Perhaps I have my days of regrets, and such like. But for that, are you yourself so rightly fitted in life—I ask at random—that you feel you are doing the exact thing that suits you? Can you say, as you rise of a morning, 'I was cut out for this kind of existence—I am exactly where I ought to be?'"

I shook my head in negative, and for some seconds nothing was said on either side.

"The score is all right," said he, at last. "Do you know"—here he gave a very peculiar smile; indeed, his face, so far as I could see, beneath the shadow of his hat and his bushy beard, actually assumed an expression of intense drollery—"do you know, I begin to think we have made a bad bargain here!"

"How so?" asked I.

"I begin to suspect," said he, "that our prisoner was worth a much heavier ransom, and that his friends would willingly have paid four times this sum for him."

"You are entirely mistaken there," said I. "It is the astonishment of every one that he has been ransomed at all. He is a good-for-nothing spendthrift fellow, whom most families would be heartily glad to be rid of; and so far from being worth a thousand pounds, I believe nine out of ten parents wouldn't have paid as many shillings for him."

"We all liked him," said he. "We found him pleasant company; and he fell into all our ways like one of ourselves."

"A scamp was sure to do that easier than an honest man," said I, forgetting in my eagerness how rude my speech was.

"Perhaps there is truth in what you say, sir," said he, haughtily. "Communities like ours scarcely invite men of unblemished morals, and therefore I do not ask you to return with me."

He arose as he spoke, and swept the coin into a bag which he wore at his side. Still, thought I, he might tell me something more about these brigands. Are they partisans of the Bourbons, or are they mere highwaymen? Here is a man fully equal to the discussion of such a question. Shall I ask him to decide the matter?

"I see," said he, laughing, as I propounded my mystery. "You want to make a book about us; but our people don't understand that sort of curiosity; they distrust, and they occasionally resent it. Stay a week or ten days where you are. Fra Bartolo will feed you better than we should, and cram you with brigand stories better still. You'll find it far pleasanter, and your readers will think so too. Addio;" and he touched his hat in a half-haughty way, and strolled out. I sat down for an instant to recover myself, when the quick clatter of a horse's feet aroused me, and he was gone.

There was no doubt of it; he was a very remarkable man; one

who, in happier circumstances, might have made a figure in life, and achieved a conspicuous position. Who was he, whence came he? The Frate could tell me all these things. As the robber said, he could cram me admirably. I arranged at once to stay a week there. My week was prolonged to a fortnight, and I was well into the third week ere I shook his great hand and said good-bye.

During all this I wrote, I may say, from morning till night. At one time it was my Blue Book; at another I took a spell at stories of robber life. I wrote short poems—songs of the brigands I called them. In fact, I dished up my highwayman in a score of ways, and found him good in all. The portmanteau which I had brought out full of gold I now carried back more closely packed with MSS. I hurried to England, only stopping once to call at the Legation, and learn that Mr. St. John had returned to his post, and was then hard at work in the Chancellerie. When I arrived in London my report was ready, but as the ministry had fallen the week before, I was obliged to re-write it every word. Lord Muddlemore had succeeded my patron, Lord Scatterdale, and as he was a strong Tory, the brigands must be Bourbons for him; and they were so. I had lived amongst them for months, and had eaten of their raw lamb and drunk of their fiery wine, and pledged toasts to the health of Francesco, and "Morte" to everybody else. What splendid fellows I made them! Every chief was a La Rochejaquelin, and as for the little bit of robbery they did now and then, it was only to pay for masses for their souls when they were shot by the Bersaglieri. My Blue Book was printed, quoted by the Times, cited in the House; I was called "the intrepid and intelligent witness" by Disraeli; and I was the rage. Dinners fell in showers over me, and invitations to country-houses came by every post. Almost worn out by these flatteries, I was resolving on a course of abstinence, when a most pressing invitation came to a county gathering where Mr. St. John was to be of the party. I had never met him, and, indeed, was rather irritated at the ingratitude he had displayed in never once acknowledging, even by a few lines, the great service I had rendered him. Still I was curious to see a man whose figure occupied so important a place in my life's tableau.

I went; but St. John had not arrived; he was detained by important affairs in town, and feared he should not be able to keep his promise. For myself, perhaps, it was all the better. I had the whole field my own, and discoursed brigandage without the fear of a contradiction.

A favourite representation with me was my first night at Rocco. I used to give it with considerable success. I described the village and the Frate, and then went on to my first sight of the renowned chief himself; for of course I never hesitated to call in Stoppa, any more than to impart to his conversation a much higher and wider reach than it actually had any claim to.

My "Stoppa" was pronounced admirable. I lounged, smoked, gesticulated, and declaimed him to perfection. I made him something between William Tell and the Corsican brothers, and nervous people wouldn't have seen him, I ween, for worlds.

On the occasion that I speak of, the company was a large one, and I outdid myself in my pains to succeed. I even brought down with me the identical portmanteau, and actually appeared in the veritable hat and coat of the original adventure.

My audience was an excellent one; they laughed where I was droll, and positively shrieked where I became pathetic. I had sent round little water-colours of the scenery, and was now proceeding to describe the inn of the Frate, and my first arrival there.

"I will not affect to declare," said I, "that it was altogether without some sense of anxiety—I might even say fear—that I approached the room where this man of crime and bloodshed awaited me. Stoppa! a name that brought terror wherever it was uttered, the word that called the soldiers to arms from the bivouac, and silenced the babe as it sobbed on its mother's breast. I entered the room, however, boldly, and advancing to the bed where he lay, said, in a careless tone, 'Capitano'—they like the title;—'capitano, how goes it?'"

Just as I uttered the words a heavy hand fell on my shoulder! I turned, and there—there at my side—stood Stoppa himself, dressed exactly as I saw him at Rocco.

Whether it was the terrible look of the fellow, or some unknown sense of fear, that his presence revived, or whether it was a terror lest my senses were deceiving me, and that a wandering brain alone had conjured up the image, I cannot say; but I fainted, and was carried senseless and unconscious to my room. A doctor was sent for, and said something about "meningitis." "I had overworked my brain, overstrained my faculties, and so forth;" with rest and repose, however, I should get over the attack. I had a sharp attack, but, in about a week, was able to get up again. As all were enjoined to avoid strictly any reference to the topic which it was believed had led to my seizure, and as I myself did not venture to approach it, days passed over with me in a half-dreamy state, my mind continually dwelling on the late incident, and striving to find out some explanation of it.

"Mr. St. John, sir, wishes to pay you a visit," said the servant one morning, as I had just finished my breakfast; and as the man retired St. John entered the room.

"I am sorry I gave you such a start the other evening," he began; but I could not suffer him to proceed; for, clutching him by the arm, I cried out, "For Heaven's sake, don't trifle with a brain so distracted as mine, but tell me at once, are you——"

"Of course I am," said he, laughing. "You don't fancy, do you, that you are the only man with a gift for humbug?"

"And it was to you I paid the ransom?" gasped I out.

"Who had a better right to it, old fellow? Tell me that?" said he, as he drew forth a cigar and lighted it. "You see, the matter was thus; I had lost very heavily at 'Baccarat' at the club; and having already overdrawn my allowance, I was sorely put to. My chief had no great affection for me, and had intimated to the banker that, if I wanted an advance, it would be as well to refuse me. In a word, I found every earth stopped, and was driven to my wits' end. I thought I'd turn brigand,—indeed, if the occasion had offered, perhaps I should,—and then I thought I'd get myself captured by the brigands. No man could complain of a fellow being a defaulter if he had been carried off by robbers. With this intention I set out for Rocco, which had got the reputation of being a spot in favour with these gentry; but to my surprise, on arriving there, I discovered Rocco was out of fashion. No brigand had patronised the place for the last three years or more, and the landlord of the White Fox told me that the village was going fast to decay. The Basilicata, in fact, was no longer 'the mode;' and every brigand, who had any sense of dignity, had betaken himself to the mountains below Atri. Fra Bartolo's account of Stoppa was not so encouraging that I cared to follow him there. He had taken a fancy of late for sending the noses as well as the ears of the captives to their friends at Naples, and I shrank from contributing my share to this interesting collection; and it was then it occurred to me to pretend I had been captured, and arrange the terms of my own ransom. Fra Bartolo helped me throughout—provided my costume, wrote my letters, and, in a word, conducted the whole negotiation like one thoroughly acquainted with all the details. I intended to have confided everything to you so soon as I secured the money, but I saw you so bent on being the hero of a great adventure, and so full of that blessed Blue Book you had come to write, that I felt it would be a sin to disenchant you. There's the whole story; and if you only keep my secret, I'll keep yours. I'm off this week to Rio as second Secretary, so that, at all events, wait till I sail."

"You may trust my prudence for a longer term than that," said I.

"I rather suspect so," said he, laughing. "They say that your clever report on brigandage is to get you a good berth, and I don't think you'll spoil your advancement by an indiscreet disclosure."

We parted with a hearty shake hands, and I never met him till ten years after. How that meeting came about, and why I now reveal this incident, I may relate at another time.

OUR ARMY AS IT IS, AND AS IT SHOULD BE.

EIGHTEEN months ago a Prussian army in one day scattered an Austrian army to the winds; and startled England stood amazed at the spectacle of four hundred thousand regular troops engaged in a single battle. But what had England to fear, even if the tide of war should surge her way? Our army was surely as brave and invincible now as it had been in the days of our forefathers. Had we not heard daily from the lips of distinguished officers in after-dinner speeches, and had not Commanders-in-Chief and Secretaries of State assured us over and over again, that all was well; nay, more, was it not written in the preamble of the Mutiny Act that the standing army of Great Britain was to consist of one hundred and thirty-eight thousand one hundred and seventeen men, for the safety of the United Kingdom, the defence of the possessions of Her Majesty's Crown, and the preservation of the balance of power in Europe? What more assurance could we want? And if we were rather rudely awakened from the little doze we had been taking since the Crimean and Indian wars, might we not safely turn round and take another forty winks, trusting to our brave and invincible hundred and thirty-eight thousand one hundred and seventeen soldiers, not to mention our militia and volunteers? There were some who said "No;" who urged that we were lulled to sleep by a false sense of security; that of our one hundred and thirty-eight thousand men, it would be the most we could do to collect thirty thousand in the whole United Kingdom, and that of those, thousands would be only half-trained recruits; that our militia and volunteers showed better on paper than on the battle-field; for that, however brave as individuals, they were utterly wanting, as indeed were our regular troops also, in any organisation beyond formation into battalions, the mere units of which armies are made; that our supply of recruits was running short, and that our troops were grumbling and discontented. These cavillers now came boldly to the front; the press took up the cry; and army-reform shouldered every other subject out of the way—for a time. But army reformers have had their day, and people have gone back to the comfortable habit of mutual and self-congratulation, and to the pleasing creed that England never can be ruined and conquered, for the good old reason of Mr. Plymley, because it would seem so very odd that it ever should be.

But, "softly," says the reader; "have we no reason for our change

of tone? Have we not had a Royal Commission on Recruiting, and a Committee on Military Administration, that have pointed out the way to set matters right, and has not their advice been accepted, to our great and complete benefit?" We have had a Royal Commission on Recruiting; it made a few sensible suggestions, but it never got beyond details; it was restricted by its orders to a small field of inquiry, and it failed to take a comprehensive view even of that. A small part only of its recommendations has been adopted, and the rest have been quietly shelved. We have had a Committee on the Military Administrative Departments, which was bold enough to ask leave to go beyond its original instructions, and which did make in March last a very valuable and comprehensive report;—but because its report was so bold and comprehensive, no action of any kind has followed.* The War Minister has promised to do something in the course of the coming session. After a year's deliberation what will that something be? All we can assert is, that there have been no such changes or improvements made as to render us any safer now than we were eighteen months ago.

The present Parliament is about to assemble again, and this is its last chance of showing what it is worth. Will it let the most flagrant faults in our military system pass from its hands unimproved? Will it perpetuate our system of recruiting, in the teeth of Mr. Whitbread's honest assurance that, when he heard the evidence given before the Commission of which he was a member, he blushed for very shame? Will it make no effort to prevent money passing over the head of merit, while the Trevelyans, father and son, have forced the Conservative Ministry to admit that the purchase system is false in theory? Is our system of military education, the foster-mother of cramming schools and outbreaks at Woolwich and Sandhurst, to remain unchanged, though exposed in all its true colours? Is nothing to be done to make the action of military law more certain and more uniform? Must the system of stoppages and payment, that worries the men, while it costs huge sums for clerks to keep it up, be looked upon as an immovable incubus? And finally, are we to be for ever saddled with the divided responsibility and double government of War Office and Horse Guards, in obedience to an obsolete theory, causing endless clashing and waste of time, while there is no real check on expenditure, and no arrangement for the administration of the affairs of an army in the field? To touch on some of these points, and urge their importance once more on the attention of Parliament and the public, to show in plain language how glaring are some faults which still exist, even if we do but repeat an oft-told tale, is our aim in this article; and without further preface we will go straight to our task.

* Since this was in type, the first step towards reform of the military administrative departments has been taken by the appointment of a Controller-in-Chief at the War Office.

If one branch of our military system needs reform more urgently than others, it is recruiting. Men cannot gather grapes off thorns, or figs off thistles, yet by our present recruiting system we are sowing thistles and planting thorns every day of our lives, and gathering their fruit in the shape of costly crime, sickness, and desertion. Let us look at this question in a manly and honest way, and see what we are really about. We do not go out into the open labour-market like other employers, and get men for our purpose simply by making it public that we want them; but we work on a system unknown elsewhere, offering payment to those who will find men for us, because, we say, men will not come without being hunted up. We divide and subdivide the United Kingdom into recruiting districts, and send out parties to obtain recruits; but it is specially ordered that no married man may be employed on this duty, and it is notorious that no commanding officer will send his best men on the recruiting service, because they are not likely to be successful recruiters, and are sure themselves to become deteriorated. Fine-looking fellows are selected, plausible in their manners, not troubled with too many scruples, and able to drink hard without being seriously affected by it;—and they are sent out with instructions to this effect: "Bring us men physically fit for the ranks; the more you get the better you will be paid; you shall have a given sum for every recruit, and whoever brings you one, he also shall be well paid." To these instructions are added certain traditions that have been handed down from one recruiting party to another, the most prominent of which are that the head-quarters of the party must be at a public-house, and that it is no use to attempt to obtain men by telling the plain unvarnished truth about the army. These being the conditions, the levy-money given to the recruiting party for each recruit obtained has recently been raised from fifteen shillings to a pound or twenty-five shillings, thus perpetuating in its worst form the public-house system of recruiting, the curse of our army. The recruiting sergeant establishes himself at a public-house, he has money to spend, and he spends it freely up to a certain point. —which he knows well, for it is a simple calculation with him how much money spent on drink will on an average produce one recruit. The more levy-money he receives, the more drink he can afford to buy; drink is his right-hand in recruiting; by its aid he works his men up to the proper point for receiving his flaming accounts of a soldier's life; and by these two weapons, drink and falsehood, he brings down his bird.

We have recently seen a similar account of the present system of recruiting questioned in the columns of the press by some who professed to speak with authority and experience; we are therefore bound to prove that our statement does not go beyond the truth, and we can do so out of the mouths of witnesses of long experience, men

who would be the last to throw dirt upon a system which they are themselves engaged in superintending. Colonel Hope Graham, the inspecting field officer of the London recruiting district, stated, in his evidence before the Royal Commission, that recruiting is "entirely" conducted in public-houses, though he would not go so far as to say that those public-houses are "of the lowest description;" and he had "not the slightest doubt that parties detached from regiments for the purpose of recruiting become very much deteriorated in character and morals." Lord William Paulet, the Adjutant-General of the army, said, "I am afraid you would not get the same number of recruits if it was not for drink. I am afraid it is drink and being hard up which lead a great many of them to enlist." "When you send men out recruiting," he said, "you generally pick a smart, intelligent fellow, who is fond of drink . . . . a jovial sort of fellow, and not a quiet, steady soldier." Captain Percy Lake said, "I think that the men who are enlisted are more or less under the influence of liquor, though I do not mean to say that they are so drunk as not to know what they are about." There is scarcely a page of the evidence that does not contain similar testimony. Mr. Haden said "Reliance is seldom or never placed on any statement made by the recruiting sergeant." An old recruiting sergeant explained to the Commissioners how he had himself been taken in on enlistment, and how he afterwards took in others, and "drank himself into the good graces of the recruits before they would come;" and another witness, a sergeant of the Horse Artillery, declared his belief that if a clear and fair statement of advantages was put into the hands of every recruit, people would not believe it, because "so many falsehoods have been put about, and the men have been so humbugged in times past."*

Need we produce further proof that the system demoralises recruiters and recruits, that it is vile and abominable, and that no good fruit can come from such an evil tree? Think of the result. The recruiting party, paid for quantity, not for quality, of men, caring not how low they descend in the scale of vice, sweep into their net the worst characters as eagerly as the best. Once to land the men, and draw the money for them, is the great object;—never mind what may come of it all in the end. What matters it to them whether the recruit is likely to be a credit or a disgrace to the army, and whether he is enlisting to serve his country or to obtain a bounty and kit and then desert? What care they if they have cheated him into a longer servitude than that into which Laban beguiled Jacob? It matters nothing. They care nothing. But let the reader place himself in the position of the recruit, inveigled into a twelve years' service, good enough in its way, but very different from what he was falsely led to expect. "Let him make the best of it," people say; "he is better off than

* Evidence before Recruiting Commission, 1866, answers Nos. 49, 50, 82, 264, 276, 1190, 1399, 2294—2304, 2363, 3453, 3454, &c., &c.

most working men." Yes; but think of the sting of being cheated; the disappointment of bright hopes; and then say if it is wonderful that, while 116,999 recruits joined the service in the seven years from 1859 to 1865, there were no less than 38,548 desertions in the same time, besides which 13,819 recruits absconded before passing into the ranks; that there were, in fact, about five deserters for every twelve recruits through that whole period of seven years. And of those who elect to remain,—is it matter for wonder that they should so often rush into debauchery, and crime, and swell the lists of sick in hospital, and of offenders in the cells and military prisons?

The evil of this state of things is almost universally admitted; and there are many who, like ourselves, would sweep away such a foul stain on our national honour at any cost. But, on the other hand, there are many who care a great deal more about expediency than abstract justice, and who give only a qualified adhesion to the proverb that "honesty is the best policy." They say, "You must get men where you can find them; we can get them from these places, by this method that you so strongly condemn, and by no other means; besides, recruits have their eyes wide enough open, and are not so easily taken in as you would have us believe." We will answer the last part of this assertion first by stating a fact within our own personal experience. Some five years ago a recruiting sergeant in one of the most important districts, who had been employed for years on the same service, was suspected of some fraud, and on being taxed with it, immediately deserted. After his desertion, not only was it discovered that, in order to obtain small sums of money, he had many scores of times sworn falsely to the enlistment of fictitious recruits whom he alleged to have absconded, and that he had forged hundreds of signatures, magistrates', surgeons', and commanding officers', for the same end;—but it came out that instead of giving each recruit the shilling, to which one would have supposed the veriest ploughboy must have known his right, he used only to touch their palms with it, and then put it back in his pocket. Surely this is proof enough that the way is easily found to cheat a recruit if the will is not wanting. For the rest, it is a mere question of raising the position of the soldier, till it is so good that turning him about his business is the heaviest punishment that can be inflicted on him. The moment this is done, recruits will want no hunting up. The police standard is a great deal higher than that of the army, and every man is required to produce a certificate of character; but there is no need to hunt men up in public-houses; they come forward in greater numbers than vacancies occur. Raise the soldier's position, and you may abolish your recruiting sergeant, levy-money, bringing-money, and bounties; you may open in every district a respectable house where men may resort, bringing their proofs of character; and, making sure that men have entered with their eyes

open, of their own accord, and because they know how valuable the service is, you may count on desertion disappearing, and on crime, perhaps even sickness, diminishing fast. Which would be really the most economical plan, and which kind of army the most likely to bring true glory to the nation, when it comes to the measurement of strength with an enemy?

We rejoice to be able to say that within the last few months an honest and simple statement of the advantages of a soldier's career has been issued from the Horse Guards, and circulated far and wide; but its effects are neutralised as long as the recruiting sergeant, the old familiar bird of prey, remains the medium through which the recruit has to be enlisted,—at all events as long as he is known by the recruit to have a direct pecuniary interest in obtaining men for the ranks. Sweep him and his belongings away; and if the present circular does not bid high enough, raise the terms till they command the required supply. By General Peel's advice, the soldier's pay has been raised twopence a day, and the number of recruits has been at once improved. Let us try a shilling a day, and see whether we cannot improve their class. Mr. Godley, the late Assistant Under-Secretary for War, drew up a memorandum on recruiting nearly ten years ago, advocating this policy. He was a deep-thinking man of great experience, and he reasoned thus;—At present the ranks receive only an inadequate supply of an inferior article, and for this there are but two remedies possible,—conscription, or making the army a desirable profession. Conscription being for obvious reasons put aside, there only remains the other course. Mr. Godley's specific was the reduction of the time of service to seven years, and the addition of a shilling a day to the soldier's pay, not to be given him to spend, but to be laid by in the savings-bank, at compound interest, and paid to him on discharge. A shilling a day at compound interest at three and a-half per cent. would amount to nearly £150 in seven years.

We cannot assent to the proposition to decrease the term of enlistment, so long as our troops are employed in India as they now are; for by the time a recruit is thoroughly trained, and fit for Indian service, a year or two of his time has elapsed, and the expense of relieving every man abroad at the end of five years would be enormous. Nor do we believe it would be necessary; for men will not object to bind themselves, as now, for twelve years, provided you can convince them they are about to enter a first-rate service. At present we cannot do so. The one thing wanted is to increase the advantages of the profession. If that were sufficiently attended to, men might be allowed to enlist for a year on probation, before taking the final step. There are different ways of improving the soldier's lot. Let us first dispose of the question of pay. Suppose, on Mr. Godley's plan, we were to put aside sixpence a day, for each man, to be paid with compound interest on his discharge. At the end of twelve years

there would be nearly £150 to his credit. If he entered the army at eighteen, at thirty years of age he could retire as a free man with this sum, a good education, and good habits of discipline. We would leave him the twopence a day lately added as pocket-money, and spend fourpence more on comforts to be indicated presently. The additional tenpence a day would cost the nation as nearly as possible £2,000,000 a year, roughly an addition of 12½ per cent. to our present expenditure on the army. On the other hand what should we save? We should suppress bounties on enlistment, levy-money, and bringing-money, all no longer necessary. The pension list, except for wounds and injuries received on duty, would be abolished; for in place of a man's eightpence a day at the end of twenty-one years, he would receive £150 at the end of twelve. Desertion would almost cease to exist, for a man would have no claim on his reserve fund until his discharge, and not only would the terms we propose bring a class of men not likely to desert, but the loss of the reserve would powerfully deter men from desertion. Contingent allowance might be abolished, for Captains of companies could no longer have men deserting in debt beyond the amount of their reserve fund. The charges for military prisons, expenses of martial law, &c., could not fail to be largely diminished; and if a man were to desert, his reserve fund would be forfeited to the State. Mr. Godley, in his official position, and with his departmental knowledge, estimated the probable extra cost to the country of such a system as £357,000 per annum; but more than that has already been given in the extra twopence per diem, so that, if his estimates are correct, the experiment with the remaining tenpence would entail no extra expenditure. The ten years that have elapsed since he propounded his idea have probably made the terms of his equation not strictly correct, but the ratios would remain practically the same; and, whether there be some slight extra cost to the nation or no, should be small consideration compared with removing this foul blot from our escutcheon. We spend millions to save our honour in Abyssinia. We stain it every day by our recruiting at home. Let Mr. Godley speak from his grave;—

"Though I have argued this question on grounds of political expediency alone, in my own opinion the objections to our present system lie far deeper than any such grounds. I believe that system to be essentially evil, based on falsehood and fraud, and tending directly to infinite immorality. I believe that no thoughtful man can have observed the scenes that take place nightly at the taverns frequented by our recruiting staff, or at the head-quarters of a militia regiment on the day that volunteers for the line are called for, without feeling shame and disgust that such proceedings should form part of the recognised machinery of the British military service. I believe that a fearful responsibility rests upon a Government which deliberately scatters such temptations among the poorest and most helpless

classes of its people, and which for its own political ends takes advantage of their weaknesses and feeds their vices. And so believing, I cannot but hold that, at any pecuniary cost, such a system ought to be reformed or abolished."

Thus far we have only dwelt on the improvement of the soldier's pecuniary position; but there are certain additions to his bodily and mental comforts so urgently required, that without some improvement in this direction, no reasonable increase of pay would alone suffice. For instance, it is no use for the authorities to tell the men they are well fed, as long as they know that they are hungry. The recruiting commissioners reported the evidence given them in regard to the deficiency of the ration of meat to be "strong and conclusive," and they recommended an addition of 33 per cent. to the quantity now issued; but nothing has been done in the matter. Now, of all incentives to discontent, there is none fiercer than an empty stomach; and from inquiries we have ourselves often made among soldiers, old as well as young, we are convinced the daily mess rations are not sufficient to stave off hunger from recruits. "You see, sir, when a recruit comes up," said a soldier to us the other day, "if he's any decent sort of a chap, he's been used to have his belly full, and he don't like having it half empty. Some of 'em cuts home again, some of 'em spends their spare pay in grub and such like, but after a bit they finds baccy and drink keep the hunger off best, and they takes to them." We had a curious confirmation of this from a pieman, who used to drive a good trade in a barrack where large numbers of recruits were till lately collected. We met him a short time since looking very much out at elbows, and his story was the same. "Since the recruiting has been slack here, I can't sell anything. Old soldiers don't want pies; they've learnt to keep the hunger out with something stronger; they would, most of 'em, sell their things for drink any day, if they could; but I never was one for smuggling liquor into the barracks." An increased meat ration would do away with hunger, and remove the craving for unhealthy deadeners of appetite. We have on the authority of Dr. Parkes that it would improve the physical condition of the men. We know it would help to allay discontent in the army. There are other matters perpetually irritating the men; the stoppages for sundry articles of kit, the fatigue jacket especially, for sea-kit on voyages abroad, and so on;—these, together with the small charges for browning arms, washing sheets, and other minor but none the less vexatious charges, would, as well as the extra ration of meat, be all covered by the expenditure at the rate of fourpence per man per day which we have suggested; and then the balance of daily pay over and above the ordinary deduction for messing would really go into the soldier's pocket, without melting away before reaching him.

But here we must pause to ask what necessity exists for paying the

soldier fifteenpence with the right hand, and with the left taking away at one time fourpence halfpenny, at another time tenpence, at another time sixpence, for food. Why must he receive a nominal pay that he never really touches, and have a perpetual complicated debtor and creditor account with the State, in the balancing of which he generally believes himself "done" in some way or other; an account that requires day-books and ledgers, to be kept by pay-sergeants, and quartermasters, and paymasters, and clerks innumerable, and that leaves the soldier ignorant what pay he will receive from day to day? Or why must an artilleryman's nominal pay be one and sixpence farthing, and his ration stoppage fourpence halfpenny, so that farthings enter into his accounts every day? We have never heard any valid or practical reason for the absurd prevailing system of keeping up these unnecessary accounts, or against the desirability of giving a soldier his ration free, and reducing his daily nominal rate of pay. There would be no difficulty in simplifying matters by giving the ration and a fixed rate of pay under all conditions, whether at home, abroad, in hospital, or on board ship, while the pay of a prisoner would cease, the prison authorities charging his ration direct to the public. There is nothing to prevent this useful reform but the vis inertiæ of existing custom. Soldiers all wish for the change.

There are many other little vexatious annoyances that it would cost nothing to remedy, but whose removal would make the men more contented. Barrack damages, even under the new system of repair by the troops themselves, are often unreasonably high. At some stations there are standing barrack-damage jokes. There was an old coal-scuttle at one place where the troops were frequently changed, that was known to have been charged as destroyed to successive occupants of the quarters, but never replaced, till it was calculated the troops had paid over ten pounds for it; when one captain, of an impatient turn, made his men break it up and throw it into the water. In the late autumnal session of Parliament, the Secretary of State for War unblushingly said, that on short sea-voyages troops would rather sleep on bare boards than have blankets, because the charges for loss of blankets amounted to such heavy sums. As men cannot eat blankets, as it is improbable that they throw them overboard, and as they could not take them ashore to sell without detection, such charges must be purely vexatious. We might multiply examples of this nature, but must pass on to other points.

If the soldier were better paid, relieved from stoppages that worry him, fed well enough to keep off hunger, and assured that he was daily adding to his account in the savings-bank, there would be quite sufficient attraction in the service to draw, without any false and specious allurements, a large class of men who look to present easy comfort beyond all things else, and who would form the main body of the army. No recruiting placard could rival the testimony of one

returning home with £150 in their pockets. It is, however, most desirable to attract a certain number of superior men, to form that essential portion of a sound military hierarchy, a well-educated and respectable body of non-commissioned officers, such as the ordinary private can look up to and respect, and such as will really form a strong connecting link between officers and men,—neither shrinking from the exercise of authority, nor above sympathising with the soldier's feelings. Such non-commissioned officers can seldom or never be found among those who have enlisted simply because, on weighing the soldier's and the ordinary working man's advantages, they have found the balance in favour of the former. They must come from a superior class, entering the service from pure desire for a soldier's life, with the ambition to rise in the profession, and the will to endure what to them is comparative hardship for a time, in order to obtain rank and honour in the future. At present we scarcely ever get such a recruit. We officer our army from the highest classes, we recruit the ranks from the lowest. We omit the intermediate class, the backbone of England's strength. Here it is that the States whose armies are recruited by conscription have so great an advantage over us, as our army is at present constituted. Conscription, if true to its creed, claims all alike, the highest and the lowest, the well-educated and the ignorant; but as soon as a payment of money is allowed to take the place of the personal service of the conscript, and substitutes, serving merely for gain, mercenaries in fact, take the place of the superior recruits, the character of the non-commissioned officers deteriorates. At the present moment France is an example of this. By the law of 1855, exoneration from service can be secured by a money payment, and the sums thus obtained have been expended by the State in bounties to old non-commissioned officers to induce them to re-engage at the end of their first term of service. The result is that the French and ourselves have from different causes reached the same end. The higher class of recruits has ceased to exist, non-commissioned officers of an inferior description are made; their re-engagement clogs promotion, and affords an additional bar to the enlistment of superior men. France is about to apply the remedy in the new Army Reorganisation Act; exoneration and the army dotation fund are to be abolished, bounties for re-engagement will cease to exist, and a flow of promotion will be secured. If re-engagement was less encouraged in our own army, we believe that material benefit would arise. Promotions from the station of private would be so much more rapid, that far greater inducements would exist for a better class of men to enlist. We hold that young soldiers, also, as a rule, are better than old soldiers;—that at four or five years' service, a soldier is well up to his work, from which time up to twelve years or so, he is in his prime; but that from that period he begins to decline. His faults are truly summed up by General Trochu, in his chapter on Young Soldiers and

Old Soldiers. He becomes hard to please, exacting, crotchety, a grumbler if you will, quick to complain, full of wants; besides, he is richer, and loves his ease. If he is led to the front in war time, he does his work vigorously, but at his own time and when it suits him. His vigour is unequal and capricious, and a body of these old soldiers who have done wonders to-day, will rest to-morrow on the strength of their reputation. He is sceptical and given to scoffing, incapable of experiencing grand emotions or being excited by great motives. His sentiments of delicacy change, and his scruples disappear by degrees. He becomes covetous, and to obtain the objects he desires, descends to unworthy and evil acts. But worst of all is the almost invariable love of drink that leads him on from bad to worse.

There would be no need to re-engage old soldiers, if the army were made as attractive as we propose, and if, by means of a daily increasing reserve fund, there were a certain provision for every man at the end of his first term of service. First-rate men, however, would not enlist if they were to be compelled to leave the army in twelve years. It must become a profession to which they can look as affording high prospects; and it can only be made so by opening the higher grades of the service to men from the ranks; in short, by giving them a large number of commissions. This is the great inducement to voluntary enlistment in the French army; this alone will ever give us a supply of valuable non-commissioned officers. The day is past when it was considered necessary that every officer should be highly born; for more than twelve years the Military Colleges have been open to any British subject who could pass the necessary examinations, and there is nothing to prevent the appearance some day of a detachment of well-educated Hindoos in the commissioned ranks of the army. Commissions are given to a certain extent to non-commissioned officers, but not according to any definite rule. If, as in the French army, one-third of all the commissions were given to non-commissioned officers who had proved themselves worthy, there would be a definite prize before the recruit,—something worth enlisting for. Nor is it only upon recruiting that this change would act with advantage. It would improve the relation between the officers and men. It would leaven the body of officers with so large a leaven of tried and earnest men, that good could not fail to result. Now, when a non-commissioned officer is promoted from the ranks, he is a kind of outcast from the society of his brother officers; but if a third of the officers had thus risen, such social ostracism could no longer exist. And, indeed, it is probable that a very superior class of men would be promoted. Now, when a non-commissioned officer is promoted, his expenses half ruin him, and he is obliged for one or two years to live more carefully than he did before promotion. Under our plan, his reserve fund would come to his aid.

But promotion to a commission is now of but small service to

the soldier. His pay is small, his expenses unbearably heavy; and worse than all, he sees one youngster after another, good, bad, and indifferent, come in below him, and step up over his head by purchase. The purchase system is a direct recognition by the State of the superiority of money to merit. It is rotten in principle, and daily growing more faulty in practice. The subject has, however, been so recently thoroughly treated by Sir Charles Trevelyan in a pamphlet which may be bought for a shilling, that we do not propose to discuss it here. We never yet met with any one who did not admit that it would be well to abolish this system, though many persons object to the change on the ground that promotion would then be so hopelessly slow, that we should have none but old men in the higher ranks of the service,—and more to this effect. We answer to this as we do on the recruiting question,—if it be wrong, for Heaven's sake, sweep it away at any cost. But we would point to Sir Charles Trevelyan's remark as well worthy of attention, that "the key of the problem of army reform is to be found in providing proper means of retirement for military officers." Here, indeed, lies the whole question. If the entire army were to fall into the same hopeless state of stagnation as the Artillery and Engineers, we should, in abolishing purchase, be only supplanting a bad state of things by a worse; but a scheme has been submitted to Parliament by Mr. Childers' select Committee for setting the retirement of these corps on a proper footing, and if the Government be only wise enough to try it, something will be learnt towards providing for the retirement of the whole army, when purchase is, as sooner or later it must be, abolished by acclamation. The chief difficulty in our opinion would be to exclude jobbery and parliamentary influence in the system of promotion to the higher ranks by selection, which must follow the abolition of the purchase system; but public opinion is daily gaining more force over our administrative departments, and we can only trust to its exercising a wholesome criticism.

We have spoken of the smallness of the subaltern officer's pay, and the very heavy nature of his expenses; and we may lay it down as an axiom that no subaltern officer can live on his pay, unless he entirely avoids the society of his comrades. The present rates of pay were arranged when the ordinary expenses of living were some fifty per cent. less than now; but while the demands upon an officer's purse have largely increased, no improvement has been made in his pay. On the other hand, changes in the pattern of uniform have become more frequent, subscriptions to one fund or another are increased, the charges under the head of "mess guests" are growing, travelling allowances have been reduced, income-tax is charged upon lodging money, and here and there new petty imposts have been inflicted; while, whenever a question arises as to an officer's title to any special remuneration, he is not met in a liberal spirit by the War Department. Our space is too limited to allow of our giving instances in

point; but many have been published within the last few months. We should never recommend making the army a highly paid service, but there should be sufficient pay for a man to live upon decently in the lower ranks. At present this is not the case.

Would that there were no weightier questions at issue in connection with our officers than that of pay; but while the system that educates them for the service is so faulty, we believe reform in that quarter is needed above all. No thoughtful man can fail to perceive that our system of military education must be wrong, unless he has shut his eyes and ears to the reports that from time to time reach the public ear. The first great evil of competitive examinations of a high class is the "cramming school." In former times a school was thought highly of or the reverse, according as it turned out not only scholars, but gentlemen. Now, so all-important has the special knowledge of crammers become to those who have boys to enter for Woolwich or Sandhurst, that so long as the teacher is known to be successful in passing his pupils, the manner in which his house is conducted counts for nothing. Numbers of young fellows contract their first habits of drinking, the bane of our military colleges, at these establishments, and by that and other vices often sow the seeds of disease deep in their constitutions. Then the examinations, conducted as they now are, are not true tests of a lad's ability. They are full of catch questions, and of book-work. They afford no real test of a knowledge of languages, little of the power of applying mathematics. And when once the student has entered the college, where he is supposed to learn habits of discipline, and knowledge to fit him for a soldier's career, what is really the case? Rules formed for boys are now loosely applied to young men,—so loosely that punishment is uncertain, and discipline is at the lowest ebb. Of late years, by giving the students their way, there has been apparent calm; but this does not teach discipline;—witness the disturbance and defiance of authority recently shown at Sandhurst. The education is thus unpractical; and a cadet joins his regiment with little or no practical knowledge of his duties as an officer. He knows somewhat more of his drill than the boy who has been allowed to obtain a direct commission by purchase, after a farcical examination, straight from the cramming school; but in other respects they are alike. Neither one nor other knows the first principles of military law; both will attend a few courts-martial, and then will sit in judgment, filling the part of juryman and judge in one, on men whose reputation and future prospects are at stake. If we except the few who have passed through the Staff College, not an officer in our army has had any training in military law; yet in their hands is placed the power of life and death, and the solving of what are often very difficult cases. It is not only in General Courts-Martial that it is important to have a knowledge of the law, yet here only is a Deputy Judge

Advocate; and him we have often known to be an officer whose opinion was by no means the one we would elect to accept. The necessity of training a certain number of officers in the principles of evidence and military law, who should be appointed presidents of courts-martial, and sit as judges, while the members form a jury, is, we hope, beginning to be recognised. A Royal Commission is to be applied for in the coming session on military education; surely Parliament will not refuse the application. It affects us nearly all, for there is scarcely a family in the country that has not some relative in the army, in one rank or another; and we must all be interested in the success of our military institutions.

For those who are anxious for a reduction of military expenditure, who grumble over an outlay of fifteen millions annually for a small army on a peace footing, we have little to offer of consolation or of hope. England scouts the idea of conscription, the only possible means of obtaining a cheap standing army. Liberty, like most things that are really good, is dear; and if Englishmen will not pay in person for the defence of England's possessions, they must pay in purse. The more prosperous the country becomes, the higher will the wages of her soldiery require to be raised. There are men in the dockyards and arsenals now at work with their sleeves turned up, and grimy faces, who are earning higher pay than ensigns and lieutenants in the line. If expenditure can be reduced, we have the firm conviction that it is only by placing all our military institutions, recruiting and promotion especially, on a sound and honest footing. Then we may try where retrenchment can fairly be attempted. The number of our officers might be reduced without any ill effects: but their pay should be increased, and so on, it will be found throughout the service, that a retrenchment in one place will probably involve an outlay in another. There are, however, two points upon which it is impossible for us now to enter, as to which reform would lead, if not immediately, certainly after a time, to reduction of expense; these are our army administration, especially the double government of Horse Guards and War Office, and our army of reserve, the placing of which on a proper footing would add largely to our security, and enable us, it may be, to reduce the army estimates. Neither of these weighty points could be touched upon with adequate force at the close of an article, but Lord Elcho has promised to bring the one, and Mr. Otway the other, before the House early in the session. They are subjects well worthy of public attention. In the meanwhile we entreat the reader to bear in mind these two points as the chief lessons we have endeavoured to enforce, that, so long as our present system of purchase goes on, we are conniving at that worst of national sins,—the sale of office; so long as recruiting is on its present footing, we are carrying out the worst form of conscription,—that which is accomplished by cheating.

PHINEAS FINN, THE IRISH MEMBER.

CHAPTER XVI.

PHINEAS FINN RETURNS TO KILLALOE.

PHINEAS FINN's first session of Parliament was over,—his first session with all its adventures. When he got back to Mrs. Bunce's house,—for Mrs. Bunce received him for a night in spite of her husband's advice to the contrary,—I am afraid he almost felt that Mrs. Bunce and her rooms were beneath him. Of course he was very unhappy,—as wretched as a man can be; there were moments in which he thought that it would hardly become him to live unless he could do something to prevent the marriage of Lady Laura and Mr. Kennedy. But, nevertheless, he had his consolations. These were reflections which had in them much of melancholy satisfaction. He had not been despised by the woman to whom he had told his love. She had not shown him that she thought him to be unworthy of her. She had not regarded his love as an offence. Indeed, she had almost told him that prudence alone had forbidden her to return his passion. And he had kissed her, and had afterwards parted from her as a dear friend. I do not know why there should have been a flavour of exquisite joy in the midst of his agony as he thought of this;—but it was so. He would never kiss her again. All future delights of that kind would belong to Mr. Kennedy, and he had no real idea of interfering with that gentleman in the fruition of his privileges. But still there was the kiss,—an eternal fact. And then, in all respects except that of his love, his visit to Loughlinter had been pre-eminently successful. Mr. Monk had become his friend, and had encouraged him to speak during the next session,—setting before him various models, and prescribing for him a course of reading. Lord Brentford had become intimate with him. He was on pleasant terms with Mr. Palliser and Mr. Gresham. And as for Mr. Kennedy,—he and Mr. Kennedy were almost bosom friends. It seemed to him that he had quite surpassed the Ratlers, Fitzgibbons, and Bonteens in that politico-social success which goes so far towards downright political success, and which is itself is so pleasant. He had surpassed these men in spite of their offices and their acquired positions, and could not but think that even Mr. Low, if he knew it all, would confess that he had been right.

As to his bosom friendship with Mr. Kennedy, that of course troubled him. Ought he not to be driving a poniard into Mr. Kennedy's heart? The conventions of life forbade that; and therefore the blow

friendship was to be excused. If not an enemy to the death, then there could be no reason why he should not be a bosom friend.

He went over to Ireland, staying but one night with Mrs. Bunce, and came down upon them at Killaloe like a god out of the heavens. Even his father was wellnigh overwhelmed by admiration, and his mother and sisters thought themselves only fit to minister to his pleasures. He had learned, if he had learned nothing else, to look as though he were master of the circumstances around him, and was entirely free from internal embarrassment. When his father spoke to him about his legal studies, he did not exactly laugh at his father's ignorance, but he recapitulated to his father so much of Mr. Monk's wisdom at second hand,—showing plainly that it was his business to study the arts of speech and the technicalities of the House, and not to study law,—that his father had nothing further to say. He had become a man of such dimensions that an ordinary father could hardly dare to inquire into his proceedings; and as for an ordinary mother,—such as Mrs. Finn certainly was,—she could do no more than look after her son's linen with awe.

Mary Flood Jones,—the reader I hope will not quite have forgotten Mary Flood Jones,—was in a great tremour when first she met the hero of Loughshane after returning from the honours of his first session. She had been somewhat disappointed because the newspapers had not been full of the speeches he had made in Parliament. And indeed the ladies of the Finn household had all been ill at ease on this head. They could not imagine why Phineas had restrained himself with so much philosophy. But Miss Flood Jones in discussing the matter with the Miss Finns had never expressed the slightest doubt of his capacity or of his judgment. And when tidings came, —the tidings came in a letter from Phineas to his father,—that he did not intend to speak that session, because speeches from a young member on his first session were thought to be inexpedient, Miss Flood Jones and the Miss Finns were quite willing to accept the wisdom of this decision, much as they might regret the effect of it. Mary, when she met her hero, hardly dared to look him in the face, but she remembered accurately all the circumstances of her last interview with him. Could it be that he wore that ringlet near his heart? Mary had received from Barbara Finn certain hairs supposed to have come from the head of Phineas, and these she always wore near her own. And moreover, since she had seen Phineas she had refused an offer of marriage from Mr. Elias Booker,—had refused it almost ignominiously,—and when doing so had told herself that she would never be false to Phineas Finn.

"We think it so good of you to come to see us again," she said.

"Good to come home to my own people?"

"Of course you might be staying with plenty of grandees if you liked it."

"No, indeed, Mary. It did happen by accident that I had to go to the house of a man whom perhaps you would call a grandee, and to meet grandees there. But it was only for a few days, and I am very glad to be taken in again here, I can assure you."

"You know how very glad we all are to have you."

"Are you glad to see me, Mary?"

"Very glad. Why should I not be glad, and Barbara the dearest friend I have in the world? Of course she talks about you,—and that makes me think of you."

"If you knew, Mary, how often I think about you." Then Mary, who was very happy at hearing such words, and who was walking in to dinner with him at the moment, could not refrain herself from pressing his arm with her little fingers. She knew that Phineas in his position could not marry at once; but she would wait for him, —oh, for ever, if he would only ask her. He of course was a wicked traitor to tell her that he was wont to think of her. But Jove smiles at lovers' perjuries;—and it is well that he should do so, as such perjuries can hardly be avoided altogether in the difficult circumstances of a successful gentleman's life. Phineas was a traitor, of course, but he was almost forced to be a traitor by the simple fact that Lady Laura Standish was in London, and Mary Flood Jones in Killaloe.

He remained for nearly five months at Killaloe, and I doubt whether his time was altogether well spent. Some of the books recommended to him by Mr. Monk he probably did read, and was often to be found encompassed by blue books. I fear that there was a grain of pretence about his blue books and parliamentary papers, and that in these days he was, in a gentle way, something of an impostor. "You must not be angry with me for not going to you," he said once to Mary's mother when he had declined an invitation to drink tea; "but the fact is that my time is not my own." "Pray don't make any apologies. We are quite aware that we have very little to offer," said Mrs. Flood Jones, who was not altogether happy about Mary, and who perhaps knew more about members of Parliament and blue books than Phineas Finn had supposed. "Mary, you are a fool to think of that man," the mother said to her daughter the next morning. "I don't think of him, mamma; not particularly." "He is no better than anybody else that I can see, and he is beginning to give himself airs," said Mrs. Flood Jones. Mary made no answer; but she went up into her room and swore before a figure of the Virgin that she would be true to Phineas for ever and ever, in spite of her mother, in spite of all the world,—in spite, should it be necessary, even of himself.

About Christmas time there came a discussion between Phineas and his father about money. "I hope you find you get on pretty well," said the doctor, who thought that he had been liberal.

"It's a tight fit," said Phineas,—who was less afraid of his father than he had been when he last discussed these things.

"I had hoped it would have been ample," said the doctor.

"Don't think for a moment, sir, that I am complaining," said Phineas. "I know it is much more than I have a right to expect."

The doctor began to make an inquiry within his own breast as to whether his son had a right to expect anything;—whether the time had not come in which his son should be earning his own bread. "I suppose," he said, after a pause, "there is no chance of your doing anything at the bar now?"

"Not immediately. It is almost impossible to combine the two studies together. Mr. Low himself was aware of that. But you are not to suppose that I have given the profession up."

"I hope not,—after all the money it has cost us."

"By no means, sir. And all that I am doing now will, I trust, be of assistance to me when I shall come to work at the law. Of course it is on the cards that I may go into office,—and if so, public business will become my profession."

"And be turned out with the Ministry!"

"Yes; that is true, sir. I must run my chance. If the worst comes to the worst, I hope I might be able to secure some permanent place. I should think that I can hardly fail to do so. But I trust I may never be driven to want it. I thought, however, that we had settled all this before." Then Phineas assumed a look of injured innocence, as though his father was driving him too hard.

"And in the mean time your money has been enough?" said the doctor, after a pause.

"I had intended to ask you to advance me a hundred pounds," said Phineas. "There were expenses to which I was driven on first entering Parliament."

"A hundred pounds."

"If it be inconvenient, sir, I can do without it." He had not as yet paid for his gun, or for that velvet coat in which he had been shooting, or, most probably, for the knickerbockers. He knew he wanted the hundred pounds badly; but he felt ashamed of himself in asking for it. If he were once in office,—though the office were but a sorry junior lordship,—he would repay his father instantly.

"You shall have it, of course," said the doctor; "but do not let the necessity for asking for more hundreds come oftener than you can help." Phineas said that he would not, and then there was no further discourse about money. It need hardly be said that he told his father nothing of that bill which he had endorsed for Laurence Fitzgibbon.

At last came the time which called him again to London and the glories of London life,—to lobbies, and the clubs, and the gossip of men in office, and the chance of promotion for himself; to the glare

of the gas-lamps, the mock anger of rival debaters, and the prospect of the Speaker's wig. During the idleness of the recess he had resolved at any rate upon this,—that a month of the session should not have passed by before he had been seen upon his legs in the House,—had been seen and heard. And many a time as he had wandered alone, with his gun, across the bogs which lie on the other side of the Shannon from Killaloe, he had practised the sort of address which he would make to the House. He would be short,—always short; and he would eschew all action and gesticulation; Mr. Monk had been very urgent in his instructions to him on that head; but he would be especially careful that no words should escape him which had not in them some purpose. He might be wrong in his purpose, but purpose there should be. He had been twitted more than once at Killaloe with his silence;—for it had been conceived by his fellow-townsmen that he had been sent to Parliament on the special ground of his eloquence. They should twit him no more on his next return. He would speak and would carry the House with him if a human effort might prevail.

So he packed up his things, and started again for London in the beginning of February. "Good-bye, Mary," he said, with his sweetest smile. But on this occasion there was no kiss, and no culling of locks. "I know he cannot help it," said Mary to herself. "It is his position. But whether it be for good or evil, I will be true to him."

"I am afraid you are unhappy," Barbara Finn said to her on the next morning.

"No; I am not unhappy,—not at all. I have a great deal to make me happy and proud. I don't mean to be a bit unhappy." Then she turned away and cried heartily, and Barbara Finn cried with her for company.

CHAPTER XVII.

PHINEAS FINN RETURNS TO LONDON.

PHINEAS had received two letters during his recess at Killaloe from two women who admired him much, which, as they were both short, shall be submitted to the reader. The first was as follows:—

"Saulsby, October 20, 18—.

"MY DEAR MR. FINN,

"I write a line to tell you that our marriage is to be hurried on as quickly as possible. Mr. Kennedy does not like to be absent from Parliament; nor will he be content to postpone the ceremony till the session be over. The day fixed is the 3rd of December, and

we then go at once to Rome, and intend to be back in London by the opening of Parliament.

"Yours most sincerely,

"LAURA STANDISH.

"Our London address will be No. 52, Grosvenor Place."

To this he wrote an answer as short, expressing his ardent wishes that those winter hymeneals might produce nothing but happiness, and saying that he would not be in town many days before he knocked at the door of No. 52, Grosvenor Place.

And the second letter was as follows :—

"Great Marlborough Street, December, 186—.

"DEAR AND HONOURED SIR,

"Bunce is getting ever so anxious about the rooms, and says as how he has a young Equity draftsman and wife and baby as would take the whole house, and all because Miss Pouncefoot said a word about her port wine, which any lady of her age might say in her tantrums, and mean nothing after all. Me and Miss Pouncefoot's knowed each other for seven years, and what's a word or two as isn't meant after that? But, honoured sir, it's not about that as I write to trouble you, but to ask if I may say for certain that you'll take the rooms again in February. It's easy to let them for the month after Christmas, because of the pantomimes. Only say at once, because Bunce is nagging me day after day. I don't want nobody's wife and baby to have to do for, and 'd sooner have a Parliament gent like yourself than any one else.

"Yours 'umbly and respectful,

"JANE BUNCE."

To this he replied that he would certainly come back to the rooms in Great Marlborough Street, should he be lucky enough to find them vacant, and he expressed his willingness to take them on and from the 1st of February. And on the 3rd of February he found himself in the old quarters, Mrs. Bunce having contrived, with much conjugal adroitness, both to keep Miss Pouncefoot and to stave off the Equity draftsman's wife and baby. Bunce, however, received Phineas very coldly, and told his wife the same evening that as far as he could see their lodger would never turn up to be a trump in the matter of the ballot. "If he means well, why did he go and stay with them lords down in Scotland. I knows all about it. I knows a man when I sees him. Mr. Low, who's looking out to be a Tory judge some of these days, is a deal better ;—because he knows what he's after."

Immediately on his return to town, Phineas found himself summoned to a political meeting at Mr. Mildmay's house in St. James's Square. "We're going to begin in earnest this time," Barrington Erle said to him at the club.

"I am glad of that," said Phineas.

"I suppose you heard all about it down at Loughlinter?"

Now, in truth, Phineas had heard very little of any settled plan down at Loughlinter. He had played a game of chess with Mr. Gresham, and had shot a stag with Mr. Palliser, and had discussed sheep with Lord Brentford, but had hardly heard a word about politics from any one of those influential gentlemen. From Mr. Monk he had heard much of a coming Reform Bill; but his communications with Mr. Monk had rather been private discussions,—in which he had learned Mr. Monk's own views on certain points,—than revelations on the intention of the party to which Mr. Monk belonged. "I heard of nothing settled," said Phineas; "but I suppose we are to have a Reform Bill."

"That is a matter of course."

"And I suppose we are not to touch the question of ballot."

"That's the difficulty," said Barrington Erle. "But of course we shan't touch it as long as Mr. Mildmay is in the Cabinet. He will never consent to the ballot as First Minister of the Crown."

"Nor would Gresham, or Palliser," said Phineas, who did not choose to bring forward his greatest gun at first.

"I don't know about Gresham. It is impossible to say what Gresham might bring himself to do. Gresham is a man who may go any lengths before he has done. Planty Pall,"—for such was the name by which Mr. Plantagenet Palliser was ordinarily known among his friends,—"would of course go with Mr. Mildmay and the Duke."

"And Monk is opposed to the ballot," said Phineas.

"Ah, that's the question. No doubt he has assented to the proposition of a measure without the ballot; but if there should come a row, and men like Turnbull demand it, and the London mob kick up a shindy, I don't know how far Monk would be steady."

"Whatever he says, he'll stick to."

"He is your leader, then?" asked Barrington.

"I don't know that I have a leader. Mr. Mildmay leads our side; and if anybody leads me, he does. But I have great faith in Mr. Monk."

"There's one who would go for the ballot to-morrow, if it were brought forward stoutly," said Barrington Erle to Mr. Ratler a few minutes afterwards, pointing to Phineas as he spoke.

"I don't think much of that young man," said Ratler.

Mr. Bonteen and Mr. Ratler had put their heads together during that last evening at Loughlinter, and had agreed that they did not think much of Phineas Finn. Why did Mr. Kennedy go down off the mountain to get him a pony? And why did Mr. Gresham play chess with him? Mr. Ratler and Mr. Bonteen may have been right in making up their minds to think but little of Phineas Finn, but Bar-

rington Erle had been quite wrong when he had said that Phineas would "go for the ballot" to-morrow. Phineas had made up his mind very strongly that he would always oppose the ballot. That he would hold the same opinion throughout his life, no one should pretend to say; but in his present mood, and under the tuition which he had received from Mr. Monk, he was prepared to demonstrate, out of the House and in it, that the ballot was, as a political measure, unmanly, ineffective, and enervating. Enervating had been a great word with Mr. Monk, and Phineas had clung to it with admiration.

The meeting took place at Mr. Mildmay's on the third day of the session. Phineas had of course heard of such meetings before, but had never attended one. Indeed, there had been no such gathering when Mr. Mildmay's party came into power early in the last session. Mr. Mildmay and his men had then made their effort in turning out their opponents, and had been well pleased to rest awhile upon their oars. Now, however, they must go again to work, and therefore the liberal party was collected at Mr. Mildmay's house, in order that the liberal party might be told what it was that Mr. Mildmay and his Cabinet intended to do.

Phineas Finn was quite in the dark as to what would be the nature of the performance on this occasion, and entertained some idea that every gentleman present would be called upon to express individually his assent or dissent in regard to the measure proposed. He walked to St. James's Square with Laurence Fitzgibbon; but even with Fitzgibbon was ashamed to show his ignorance by asking questions. "After all," said Fitzgibbon, "this kind of thing means nothing. I know as well as possible, and so do you, what Mr. Mildmay will say,—and then Gresham will say a few words; and then Turnbull will make a murmur, and then we shall all assent,—to anything or to nothing;—and then it will be over." Still Phineas did not understand whether the assent required would or would not be an individual personal assent. When the affair was over he found that he was disappointed, and that he might almost as well have stayed away from the meeting,—except that he had attended at Mr. Mildmay's bidding, and had given a silent adhesion to Mr. Mildmay's plan of reform for that session. Laurence Fitzgibbon had been very nearly correct in his description of what would occur. Mr. Mildmay made a long speech. Mr. Turnbull, the great Radical of the day,—the man who was supposed to represent what many called the Manchester school of politics,—asked half a dozen questions. In answer to these Mr. Gresham made a short speech. Then Mr. Mildmay made another speech, and then all was over. The gist of the whole thing was, that there should be a Reform Bill,—very generous in its enlargement of the franchise,—but no ballot. Mr. Turnbull expressed his doubt whether this would be satisfactory to the country; but even Mr. Turnbull was soft in his tone and complaisant

in his manner. As there was no reporter present,—that plan of turning private meetings at gentlemen's houses into public assemblies not having been as yet adopted,—there could be no need for energy or violence. They went to Mr. Mildmay's house to hear Mr. Mildmay's plan,—and they heard it.

Two days after this Phineas was to dine with Mr. Monk. Mr. Monk had asked him in the lobby of the House. "I don't give dinner parties," he said, "but I should like you to come and meet Mr. Turnbull." Phineas accepted the invitation as a matter of course. There were many who said that Mr. Turnbull was the greatest man in the nation, and that the nation could be saved only by a direct obedience to Mr. Turnbull's instructions. Others said that Mr. Turnbull was a demagogue, and at heart a rebel; that he was un-English, false, and very dangerous. Phineas was rather inclined to believe the latter statement; and as danger and dangerous men are always more attractive than safety and safe men, he was glad to have an opportunity of meeting Mr. Turnbull at dinner.

In the meantime he went to call on Lady Laura, whom he had not seen since the last evening which he spent in her company at Loughlinter,—whom, when he was last speaking to her, he had kissed close beneath the falls of the Linter. He found her at home, and with her was her husband. "Here is a Darby and Joan meeting, is it not," she said, getting up to welcome him. He had seen Mr. Kennedy before, and had been standing close to him during the meeting at Mr. Gresham's.

"I am very glad to find you both together."

"But Robert is going away this instant," said Lady Laura. "Has he told you of our adventures at Rome."

"Not a word."

"Then I must tell you;—but not now. The dear old Pope was so civil to us. I came to think it quite a pity that he should be in trouble."

"I must be off," said the husband, getting up. "But I shall meet you at dinner, I believe."

"Do you dine at Mr. Monk's?"

"Yes, and am asked expressly to hear Turnbull make a convert of you. There are only to be us four. Au revoir." Then Mr. Kennedy went, and Phineas found himself alone with Lady Laura. He hardly knew how to address her, and remained silent. He had not prepared himself for the interview as he ought to have done, and felt himself to be awkward. She evidently expected him to speak, and for a few seconds sat waiting for what he might say.

At last she found that it was incumbent on her to begin. "Were you surprised at our suddenness when you got my note?"

"A little. You had spoken of waiting."

"I had never imagined that he would have been impetuous. And

he seems to think that even the business of getting himself married would not justify him in staying away from Parliament. He is a rigid martinet in all matters of duty."

"I did not wonder that he should be in a hurry, but that you should submit."

"I told you that I should do just what the wise people told me. I asked papa, and he said that it would be better. So the lawyers were driven out of their minds, and the milliners out of their bodies, and the thing was done."

"Who was there at the marriage?"

"Oswald was not there. That I know is what you mean to ask. Papa said that he might come if he pleased. Oswald stipulated that he should be received as a son. Then my father spoke the hardest word that ever fell from his mouth."

"What did he say?"

"I will not repeat it,—not altogether. But he said that Oswald was not entitled to a son's treatment. He was very sore about my money, because Robert was so generous as to his settlement. So the breach between them is as wide as ever."

"And where is Chiltern now?" said Phineas.

"Down in Northamptonshire, staying at some inn from whence he hunts. He tells me that he is quite alone,—that he never dines out, never has any one to dine with him, that he hunts five or six days a week,—and reads at night."

"That is not a bad sort of life."

"Not if the reading is any good. But I cannot bear that he should be so solitary. And if he breaks down in it, then his companions will not be fit for him. Do you ever hunt?"

"Oh yes,—at home in county Clare. All Irishmen hunt."

"I wish you would go down to him and see him. He would be delighted to have you."

Phineas thought over the proposition before he answered it, and then made the reply that he had made once before. "I would do so, Lady Laura,—but that I have no money for hunting in England."

"Alas, alas!" said she, smiling. "How that hits one on every side!"

"I might manage it,—for a couple of days,—in March."

"Do not do what you think you ought not to do," said Lady Laura.

"No;—certainly. But I should like it, and if I can I will."

"He could mount you, I have no doubt. He has no other expense now, and keeps a stable full of horses. I think he has seven or eight. And now tell me, Mr. Finn; when are you going to charm the House? Or is it your first intention to strike terror?"

He blushed,—he knew that he blushed as he answered. "Oh, I

suppose I shall make some sort of attempt before long. I can't bear the idea of being a bore."

"I think you ought to speak, Mr. Finn."

"I do not know about that, but I certainly mean to try. There will be lots of opportunities about the new Reform Bill. Of course you know that Mr. Mildmay is going to bring it in at once. You hear all that from Mr. Kennedy."

"And papa has told me. I still see papa almost every day. You must call upon him. Mind you do." Phineas said that he certainly would. "Papa is very lonely now, and I sometimes feel that I have been almost cruel in deserting him. And I think that he has a horror of the house,—especially later in the year,—always fancying that he will meet Oswald. I am so unhappy about it all, Mr. Finn."

"Why doesn't your brother marry?" said Phineas, knowing nothing as yet of Lord Chiltern and Violet Effingham. "If he were to marry well, that would bring your father round."

"Yes,—it would."

"And why should he not?"

Lady Laura paused before she answered; and then she told the whole story. "He is violently in love, and the girl he loves has refused him twice."

"Is it with Miss Effingham?" asked Phineas, guessing the truth at once, and remembering what Miss Effingham had said to him when riding in the wood.

"Yes;—with Violet Effingham; my father's pet, his favourite, whom he loves next to myself,—almost as well as myself; whom he would really welcome as a daughter. He would gladly make her mistress of his house, and of Saulsby. Everything would then go smoothly."

"But she does not like Lord Chiltern?"

"I believe she loves him in her heart; but she is afraid of him. As she says herself, a girl is bound to be so careful of herself. With all her seeming frolic, Violet Effingham is very wise."

Phineas, though not conscious of any feeling akin to jealousy, was annoyed at the revelation made to him. Since he had heard that Lord Chiltern was in love with Miss Effingham, he did not like Lord Chiltern quite as well as he had done before. He himself had simply admired Miss Effingham, and had taken pleasure in her society; but, though this had been all, he did not like to hear of another man wanting to marry her, and he was almost angry with Lady Laura for saying that she believed Miss Effingham loved her brother. If Miss Effingham had twice refused Lord Chiltern, that ought to have been sufficient. It was not that Phineas was in love with Miss Effingham himself. As he was still violently in love with Lady Laura, any other love was of course impossible; but, nevertheless, there was something offensive to him in the story as it had been told.

"If it be wisdom on her part," said he, answering Lady Laura's last words, "you cannot find fault with her for her decision."

"I find no fault;—but I think my brother would make her happy."

Lady Laura, when she was left alone, at once reverted to the tone in which Phineas Finn had answered her remarks about Miss Effingham. Phineas was very ill able to conceal his thoughts, and wore his heart almost upon his sleeve. "Can it be possible that he cares for her himself?" That was the nature of Lady Laura's first question to herself upon the matter. And in asking herself that question, she thought nothing of the disparity in rank or fortune between Phineas Finn and Violet Effingham. Nor did it occur to her as at all improbable that Violet might accept the love of him who had so lately been her own lover. But the idea grated against her wishes on two sides. She was most anxious that Violet should ultimately become her brother's wife,—and she could not be pleased that Phineas should be able to love any woman.

I must beg my readers not to be carried away by those last words into any erroneous conclusion. They must not suppose that Lady Laura Kennedy, the lately married bride, indulged a guilty passion for the young man who had loved her. Though she had probably thought often of Phineas Finn since her marriage, her thoughts had never been of a nature to disturb her rest. It had never occurred to her even to think that she regarded him with any feeling that was an offence to her husband. She would have hated herself had any such idea presented itself to her mind. She prided herself on being a pure high-principled woman, who had kept so strong a guard upon herself as to be nearly free from the dangers of those rocks upon which other women make shipwreck of their happiness. She took pride in this, and would then blame herself for her own pride. But though she so blamed herself, it never occurred to her to think that to her there might be danger of such shipwreck. She had put away from herself the idea of love when she had first perceived that Phineas had regarded her with more than friendship, and had accepted Mr. Kennedy's offer with an assured conviction that by doing so she was acting best for her own happiness and for that of all those concerned. She had felt the romance of the position to be sweet when Phineas had stood with her at the top of the falls of the Linter, and had told her of the hopes which he had dared to indulge. And when at the bottom of the falls he had presumed to take her in his arms, she had forgiven him without difficulty to herself, telling herself that that would be the alpha and the omega of the romance of her life. She had not felt herself bound to tell Mr. Kennedy of what had occurred,—but she had felt that he could hardly have been angry even had he been told. And she had often thought of her lover since, and of his love,—telling herself that she too had once had a lover, never regarding her husband in that light;

but her thoughts had not frightened her as guilty thoughts will do. There had come a romance which had been pleasant, and it was gone. It had been soon banished,—but it had left to her a sweet flavour, of which she loved to taste the sweetness though she knew that it was gone. And the man should be her friend, but especially her husband's friend. It should be her care to see that his life was successful,—and especially her husband's care. It was a great delight to her to know that her husband liked the man. And the man would marry, and the man's wife should be her friend. All this had been very pure and very pleasant. Now an idea had flitted across her brain that the man was in love with some one else,—and she did not like it!

But she did not therefore become afraid of herself, or in the least realise at once the danger of her own position. Her immediate glance at the matter did not go beyond the falseness of men. If it were so, as she suspected,—if Phineas Finn had in truth transferred his affections to Violet Effingham, of how little value was the love of such a man! It did not occur to her at this moment that she also had transferred hers to Robert Kennedy, or that, if not, she had done worse. But she did remember that in the autumn this young Phœbus among men had turned his back upon her out upon the mountain that he might hide from her the agony of his heart when he learned that she was to be the wife of another man; and that now, before the winter was over, he could not hide from her the fact that his heart was elsewhere! And then she speculated, and counted up facts, and satisfied herself that Phineas could not even have seen Violet Effingham since they two had stood together upon the mountain. How false are men!—how false and how weak of heart!

"Chiltern and Violet Effingham!" said Phineas to himself, as he walked away from Grosvenor Place. "Is it fair that she should be sacrificed because she is rich, and because she is so winning and so fascinating that Lord Brentford would receive even his son for the sake of receiving also such a daughter-in-law?" Phineas also liked Lord Chiltern; had seen or fancied that he had seen fine things in him; had looked forward to his regeneration, hoping, perhaps, that he might have some hand in the good work. But he did not recognise the propriety of sacrificing Violet Effingham even for work so good as this. If Miss Effingham had refused Lord Chiltern twice, surely that ought to be sufficient. It did not as yet occur to him that the love of such a girl as Violet would be a great treasure—to himself. As regarded himself, he was still in love,—hopelessly in love, with Lady Laura Kennedy!

CHAPTER XVIII.

MR. TURNBULL.

It was a Wednesday evening and there was no House;—and at seven o'clock Phineas was at Mr. Monk's hall door. He was the first of the guests and he found Mr. Monk alone in the dining-room. "I am doing butler," said Mr. Monk, who had a brace of decanters in his hands, which he proceeded to put down in the neighbourhood of the fire. "But I have finished, and now we will go up-stairs to receive the two great men properly."

"I beg your pardon for coming too early," said Finn.

"Not a minute too early. Seven is seven, and it is I who am too late. But, Lord bless you, you don't think I'm ashamed of being found in the act of decanting my own wine! I remember Lord Palmerston saying before some committee about salaries, five or six years ago now, I daresay, that it wouldn't do for an English Minister to have his hall door opened by a maid-servant. Now, I'm an English Minister, and I've got nobody but a maid-servant to open my hall door, and I'm obliged to look after my own wine. I wonder whether it's improper? I shouldn't like to be the means of injuring the British Constitution."

"Perhaps if you resign soon, and if nobody follows your example, grave evil results may be avoided."

"I sincerely hope so, for I do love the British Constitution; and I love also the respect in which members of the English Cabinet are held. Now Turnbull, who will be here in a moment, hates it all; but he is a rich man, and has more powdered footmen hanging about his house than ever Lord Palmerston had himself."

"He is still in business."

"Oh yes;—and makes his thirty thousand a year. Here he is. How are you, Turnbull? We were talking about my maid-servant. I hope she opened the door for you properly."

"Certainly,—as far as I perceived," said Mr. Turnbull, who was better at a speech than a joke. "A very respectable young woman I should say."

"There is not one more so in all London," said Mr. Monk; "but Finn seems to think that I ought to have a man in livery."

"It is a matter of perfect indifference to me," said Mr. Turnbull. "I am one of those who never think of such things."

"Nor I either," said Mr. Monk. Then the laird of Loughlinter was announced, and they all went down to dinner.

Mr. Turnbull was a good-looking robust man about sixty, with long grey hair and a red complexion, with hard eyes, a well-cut nose, and full lips. He was nearly six feet high, stood quite upright, and always wore a black swallow-tail coat, black trousers, and a black silk

waistcoat. In the House, at least, he was always so dressed, and at dinner tables. What difference there might be in his costume when at home at Staleybridge few of those who saw him in London had the means of knowing. There was nothing in his face to indicate special talent. No one looking at him would take him to be a fool; but there was none of the fire of genius in his eye, nor was there in the lines of his mouth any of that play of thought or fancy which is generally to be found in the faces of men and women who have made themselves great. Mr. Turnbull had certainly made himself great, and could hardly have done so without force of intellect. He was one of the most popular, if not the most popular politician in the country. Poor men believed in him, thinking that he was their most honest public friend; and men who were not poor believed in his power, thinking that his counsels must surely prevail. He had obtained the ear of the House and the favour of the reporters, and opened his voice at no public dinner, on no platform, without a conviction that the words spoken by him would be read by thousands. The first necessity for good speaking is a large audience; and of this advantage Mr. Turnbull had made himself sure. And yet it could hardly be said that he was a great orator. He was gifted with a powerful voice, with strong, and I may, perhaps, call them broad convictions, with perfect self-reliance, with almost unlimited powers of endurance, with hot ambition, with no keen scruples, and with a moral skin of great thickness. Nothing said against him pained him, no attacks wounded him, no raillery touched him in the least. There was not a sore spot about him, and probably his first thoughts on waking every morning told him that he, at least, was totus teres atque rotundus. He was, of course, a thorough radical,—and so was Mr. Monk. But Mr. Monk's first waking thoughts were probably exactly the reverse of those of his friend. Mr. Monk was a much better man in debate than Mr. Turnbull;—but Mr. Monk was ever doubting of himself, and never doubted of himself so much as when he had been most violent, and also most effective, in debate. When Mr. Monk jeered at himself for being a Cabinet Minister and keeping no attendant grander than a parlour-maid, there was a substratum of self-doubt under the joke.

Mr. Turnbull was certainly a great Radical, and as such enjoyed a great reputation. I do not think that high office in the State had ever been offered to him; but things had been said which justified him, or seemed to himself to justify him, in declaring that in no possible circumstances would he serve the Crown. "I serve the people," he had said, "and much as I respect the servants of the Crown, I think that my own office is the higher." He had been greatly called to task for this speech; and Mr. Mildmay, the present Premier, had asked him whether he did not recognise the so-called servants of the Crown as the most hard-worked and truest servants of the people. The House and the press had supported Mr. Mildmay, but to all that

Mr. Turnbull was quite indifferent; and when an assertion made by him before three or four thousand persons at Manchester, to the effect that he,—he specially,—was the friend and servant of the people, was received with acclamation, he felt quite satisfied that he had gained his point. Progressive reform in the franchise, of which manhood suffrage should be the acknowledged and not far distant end, equal electoral districts, ballot, tenant right for England as well as Ireland, reduction af the standing army till there should be no standing army to reduce, utter disregard of all political movements in Europe, an almost idolatrous admiration for all political movements in America, free trade in everything except malt, and an absolute extinction of a State Church,—these were among the principal articles in Mr. Turnbull's political catalogue. And I think that when once he had learned the art of arranging his words as he stood upon his legs, and had so mastered his own voice as to have obtained the ear of the House, the work of his life was not difficult. Having nothing to construct, he could always deal with generalities. Being free from responsibility, he was not called upon either to study details or to master even great facts. It was his business to inveigh against existing evils, and perhaps there is no easier business when once the privilege of an audience has been attained. It was his work to cut down forest-trees, and he had nothing to do with the subsequent cultivation of the land. Mr. Monk had once told Phineas Finn how great were the charms of that inaccuracy which was permitted to the opposition. Mr. Turnbull no doubt enjoyed these charms to the full, though he would sooner have put a padlock on his mouth for a month than have owned as much. Upon the whole, Mr. Turnbull was no doubt right in resolving that he would not take office, though some reticence on that subject might have been more becoming to him.

The conversation at dinner, though it was altogether on political subjects, had in it nothing of special interest as long as the girl was there to change the plates; but when she was gone, and the door was closed, it gradually opened out, and there came on to be a pleasant sparring match between the two great Radicals,—the Radical who had joined himself to the governing powers, and the Radical who stood aloof. Mr. Kennedy barely said a word now and then, and Phineas was almost as silent as Mr. Kennedy. He had come there to hear some such discussion, and was quite willing to listen while guns of such great calibre were being fired off for his amusement.

"I think Mr. Mildmay is making a great step forward," said Mr. Turnbull.

"I think he is," said Mr. Monk.

"I did not believe that he would ever live to go so far. It will hardly suffice even for this year; but still, coming from him, it is a great deal. It only shows how far a man may be made to go, if only the proper force be applied. After all, it matters very little who are the Ministers."

"That is what I have always declared," said Mr. Monk.

"Very little indeed. We don't mind whether it be Lord De Terrier, or Mr. Mildmay, or Mr. Gresham, or you yourself, if you choose to get yourself made First Lord of the Treasury."

"I have no such ambition, Turnbull."

"I should have thought you had. If I went in for that kind of thing myself, I should like to go to the top of the ladder. I should feel that if I could do any good at all by becoming a Minister, I could only do it by becoming first Minister."

"You wouldn't doubt your own fitness for such a position?"

"I doubt my fitness for the position of any Minister," said Mr. Turnbull."

"You mean that on other grounds," said Mr. Kennedy.

"I mean it on every ground," said Mr. Turnbull, rising on his legs and standing with his back to the fire. "Of course I am not fit to have diplomatic intercourse with men who would come to me simply with the desire of deceiving me. Of course I am unfit to deal with members of Parliament who would flock around me because they wanted places. Of course I am unfit to answer every man's question so as to give no information to any one."

"Could you not answer them so as to give information?" said Mr. Kennedy.

But Mr. Turnbull was so intent on his speech that it may be doubted whether he heard this interruption. He took no notice of it as he went on. "Of course I am unfit to maintain the proprieties of a seeming confidence between a Crown all-powerless and a people all-powerful. No man recognises his own unfitness for such work more clearly than I do, Mr. Monk. But if I took in hand such work at all, I should like to be the leader, and not the led. Tell us fairly, now, what are your convictions worth in Mr. Mildmay's Cabinet?"

"That is a question which a man may hardly answer himself," said Mr. Monk.

"It is a question which a man should at least answer for himself before he consents to sit there," said Mr. Turnbull, in a tone of voice which was almost angry.

"And what reason have you for supposing that I have omitted that duty?" said Mr. Monk.

"Simply this,—that I can not reconcile your known opinions with the practices of your colleagues."

"I will not tell you what my convictions may be worth in Mr. Mildmay's Cabinet. I will not take upon myself to say that they are worth the chair on which I sit when I am there. But I will tell you what my aspirations were when I consented to fill that chair, and you shall judge of their worth. I thought that they might possibly leaven the batch of bread which we have to bake,—giving to the whole batch more of the flavour of reform than it would have possessed had I

absented myself. I thought that when I was asked to join Mr. Mildmay and Mr. Gresham, the very fact of that request indicated liberal progress, and that if I refused the request I should be declining to assist in good work."

"You could have supported them, if anything were proposed worthy of support," said Mr. Turnbull.

"Yes; but I could not have been so effective in taking care that some measure be proposed worthy of support as I may possibly be now. I thought a good deal about it, and I believe that my decision was right."

"I'm sure you were right," said Mr. Kennedy.

"There can be no juster object of ambition than a seat in the Cabinet," said Phineas.

"Sir, I much dispute that," said Mr. Turnbull, turning round upon our hero. "I regard the position of our high Ministers as most respectable."

"Thank you for so much," said Mr. Monk. But the orator went on, again regardless of the interruption:—

"The position of gentlemen in inferior offices,—of gentlemen who attend rather to the nods and winks of their superiors in Downing Street than to the interests of their constituents,—I do not regard as being highly respectable."

"A man cannot begin at the top," said Phineas.

"Our friend Mr. Monk has begun at what you are pleased to call the top," said Mr. Turnbull. "But I will not profess to think that even he has raised himself by going into office. To be an independent representative of a really popular commercial constituency is, in my estimation, the highest object of an Englishman's ambition."

"But why commercial, Mr. Turnbull?" said Mr. Kennedy.

"Because the commercial constituencies really do elect their own members in accordance with their own judgments, whereas the counties and the small towns are coerced either by individuals or by a combination of aristocratic influences."

"And yet," said Mr. Kennedy, "there are not half a dozen Conservatives returned by all the counties in Scotland."

"Scotland is very much to be honoured," said Mr. Turnbull.

Mr. Kennedy was the first to take his departure, and Mr. Turnbull followed him very quickly. Phineas got up to go at the same time, but stayed at his host's request, and sat for a while smoking a cigar.

"Turnbull is a wonderful man," said Mr. Monk.

"Does he not domineer too much?"

"His fault is not arrogance, so much as ignorance that there is, or should be, a difference between public and private life. In the House of Commons a man in Mr. Turnbull's position must speak with dictatorial assurance. He is always addressing, not the House only, but the country at large, and the country will not believe in him

unless he believe in himself. But he forgets that he is not always addressing the country at large. I wonder what sort of a time Mrs. Turnbull and the little Turnbulls have of it?"

Phineas, as he went home, made up his mind that Mrs. Turnbull and the little Turnbulls must probably have a bad time of it.

CHAPTER XIX.

LORD CHILTERN RIDES HIS HORSE BONEBREAKER.

It was known that whatever might be the details of Mr. Mildmay's bill, the ballot would not form a part of it; and as there was a strong party in the House of Commons, and a very numerous party out of it, who were desirous that voting by ballot should be made a part of the electoral law, it was decided that an independent motion should be brought on in anticipation of Mr. Mildmay's bill. The arrangement was probably one of Mr. Mildmay's own making; so that he might be hampered by no opposition on that subject by his own followers if,—as he did not doubt,—the motion should be lost. It was expected that the debate would not last over one night, and Phineas resolved that he would make his maiden speech on this occasion. He had very strong opinions as to the inefficacy of the ballot for any good purposes, and thought that he might be able to strike out from his convictions some sparks of that fire which used to be so plentiful with him at the old debating clubs. But even at breakfast that morning his heart began to beat quickly at the idea of having to stand on his legs before so critical an audience.

He knew that it would be well that he should if possible get the subject off his mind during the day, and therefore went out among people who certainly would not talk to him about the ballot. He sat for nearly an hour in the morning with Mr. Low, and did not even tell Mr. Low that it was his intention to speak on that day. Then he made one or two other calls, and at about three went up to Portman Square to look for Lord Chiltern. It was now nearly the end of February, and Phineas had often seen Lady Laura. He had not seen her brother, but had learned from his sister that he had been driven up to London by the frost. He was told by the porter at Lord Brentford's that Lord Chiltern was in the house, and as he was passing through the hall he met Lord Brentford himself. He was thus driven to speak, and felt himself called upon to explain why he was there. "I am come to see Lord Chiltern," he said.

"Is Lord Chiltern in the house?" said the Earl, turning to the servant.

"Yes, my lord; his lordship arrived last night."

"You will find him upstairs, I suppose," said the Earl. "For

myself, I know nothing of him." He spoke in an angry tone, as though he resented the fact that any one should come to his house to call upon his son; and turned his back quickly upon Phineas. But he thought better of it before he reached the front door, and turned again. "By-the-bye," said he, "what majority shall we have to-night, Finn?"

"Pretty nearly as many as you please to name, my lord," said Phineas.

"Well;—yes; I suppose we are tolerably safe. You ought to speak upon it."

"Perhaps I may," said Phineas, feeling that he blushed as he spoke.

"Do," said the Earl. "Do. If you see Lord Chiltern will you tell him from me that I should be glad to see him before he leaves London. I shall be at home till noon to-morrow." Phineas, much astonished at the commission given to him, of course said that he would do as he was desired, and then passed on to Lord Chiltern's apartments.

He found his friend standing in the middle of the room, without coat and waistcoat, with a pair of dumb-bells in his hands. "When there's no hunting I'm driven to this kind of thing," said Lord Chiltern.

"I suppose it's good exercise," said Phineas.

"And it gives me something to do. When I'm in London I feel like a gipsy in church, till the time comes for prowling out at night. I've no occupation for my days whatever, and no place to which I can take myself. I can't stand in a club window as some men do, and I should disgrace any decent club if I did stand there. I belong to the Travellers, but I doubt whether the porter would let me go in."

"I think you pique yourself on being more of an outer Bohemian than you are," said Phineas.

"I pique myself on this, that whether Bohemian or not, I will go nowhere that I am not wanted. Though,—for the matter of that, I suppose I'm not wanted here." Then Phineas gave him the message from his father. "He wishes to see me to-morrow morning?" continued Lord Chiltern. "Let him send me word what it is he has to say to me. I do not choose to be insulted by him, though he is my father."

"I would certainly go, if I were you."

"I doubt it very much, if all the circumstances were the same. Let him tell me what he wants."

"Of course I cannot ask him, Chiltern."

"I know what he wants very well. Laura has been interfering and doing no good. You know Violet Effingham?"

"Yes; I know her," said Phineas, much surprised.

"They want her to marry me."

"And you do not wish to marry her?"

"I did not say that. But do you think that such a girl as Miss Effingham would marry such a man as I am? She would be much more likely to take you. By George, she would! Do you know that she has three thousand a year of her own?"

"I know that she has money."

"That's about the tune of it. I would take her without a shilling to-morrow, if she would have me,—because I like her. She is the only girl I ever did like. But what is the use of my liking her? They have painted me so black among them, especially my father, that no decent girl would think of marrying me."

"Your father can't be angry with you if you do your best to comply with his wishes."

"I don't care a straw whether he be angry or not. He allows me eight hundred a year, and he knows that if he stopped it I should go to the Jews the next day. I could not help myself. He can't leave an acre away from me, and yet he won't join me in raising money for the sake of paying Laura her fortune."

"Lady Laura can hardly want money now."

"That detestable prig whom she has chosen to marry, and whom I hate with all my heart, is richer than ever Crœsus was; but nevertheless Laura ought to have her own money. She shall have it some day."

"I would see Lord Brentford, if I were you."

"I will think about it. Now tell me about coming down to Willingford. Laura says you will come some day in March. I can mount you for a couple of days and should be delighted to have you. My horses all pull like the mischief, and rush like devils, and want a deal of riding; but an Irishman likes that."

"I do not dislike it particularly."

"I like it. I prefer to have something to do on horseback. When a man tells me that a horse is an armchair, I always tell him to put the brute into his bedroom. Mind you come. The house I stay at is called the Willingford Bull, and it's just four miles from Peterborough." Phineas swore that he would go down and ride the pulling horses, and then took his leave, earnestly advising Lord Chiltern, as he went, to keep the appointment proposed by his father.

When the morning came, at half-past eleven, the son, who had been standing for half an hour with his back to the fire in the large gloomy dining-room, suddenly rang the bell. "Tell the Earl," he said to the servant, "that I am here, and will go to him if he wishes it." The servant came back, and said that the Earl was waiting. Then Lord Chiltern strode after the man into his father's room.

"Oswald," said the father, "I have sent for you because I think it may be as well to speak to you on some business. Will you sit down?" Lord Chiltern sat down, but did not answer a word. "I feel very unhappy about your sister's fortune," said the Earl.

"So do I,—very unhappy. We can raise the money between us, and pay her to-morrow, if you please it."

"It was in opposition to my advice that she paid your debts."

"And in opposition to mine too."

"I told her that I would not pay them, and were I to give her back to-morrow, as you say, the money that she has so used, I should be stultifying myself. But I will do so on one condition. I will join with you in raising the money for your sister, on one condition."

"What is that?"

"Laura tells me,—indeed she has told me often,—that you are attached to Violet Effingham."

"But Violet Effingham, my lord, is unhappily not attached to me."

"I do not know how that may be. Of course I cannot say. I have never taken the liberty of interrogating her upon the subject."

"Even you, my lord, could hardly have done that."

"What do you mean by that? I say that I never have," said the Earl, angrily.

"I simply mean that even you could hardly have asked Miss Effingham such a question. I have asked her, and she has refused me."

"But girls often do that, and yet accept afterwards the men whom they have refused. Laura tells me that she believes that Violet would consent if you pressed your suit."

"Laura knows nothing about it, my lord."

"There you are probably wrong. Laura and Violet are very close friends, and have no doubt discussed this matter among them. At any rate, it may be as well that you should hear what I have to say. Of course I shall not interfere myself. There is no ground on which I can do so with propriety."

"None whatever," said Lord Chiltern.

The Earl became very angry, and nearly broke down in his anger. He paused for a moment, feeling disposed to tell his son to go and never to see him again. But he gulped down his wrath, and went on with his speech. "My meaning, sir, is this;—that I have so great faith in Violet Effingham, that I would receive her acceptance of your hand as the only proof which would be convincing to me of amendment in your mode of life. If she were to do so, I would join with you in raising money to pay your sister, would make some further sacrifice with reference to an income for you and your wife, and——would make you both welcome to Saulsby,—if you chose to come." The Earl's voice hesitated much, and became almost tremulous as he made the last proposition. And his eyes had fallen away from his son's gaze, and he had bent a little over the table, and was moved. But he recovered himself at once, and added, with all proper dignity, "If you have anything to say I shall be glad to hear it."

"All your offers would be nothing, my lord, if I did not like the girl."

"I should not ask you to marry a girl if you did not like her, as you call it."

"But as to Miss Effingham, it happens that our wishes jump together. I have asked her, and she has refused me. I don't even know where to find her to ask her again. If I went to Lady Baldock's house the servants would not let me in."

"And whose fault is that?"

"Yours partly, my lord. You have told everybody that I am the devil,—and now all the old women believe it."

"I never told anybody so."

"I'll tell you what I'll do. I will go down to Lady Baldock's to-day. I suppose she is at Baddingham. And if I can get speech of Miss Effingham——"

"Miss Effingham is not at Baddingham. Miss Effingham is staying with your sister in Grosvenor Place. I saw her yesterday."

"She is in London?"

"I tell you that I saw her yesterday."

"Very well, my lord. Then I will do the best I can. Laura will tell you of the result."

The father would have given the son some advice as to the mode in which he should put forward his claim upon Violet's hand, but the son would not wait to hear it. Choosing to presume that the conference was over, he went back to the room in which he kept his dumb-bells, and for a minute or two went to work at his favourite exercise. But he soon put the dumb-bells down, and began to prepare himself for his work. If this thing was to be done, it might as well be done at once. He looked out of his window, and saw that the streets were in a mess of slush. White snow was becoming black mud, as it will do in London; and the violence of frost was giving way to the horrors of thaw. All would be soft and comparatively pleasant in Northamptonshire on the following morning, and if everything went right he would breakfast at the Willingford Bull. He would go down by the hunting train, and be at the inn by ten. The meet was only six miles distant, and all would be pleasant. He would do this whatever might be the result of his work to-day;—but in the meantime he would go and do his work. He had a cab called, and within half an hour of the time at which he had left his father, he was at the door of his sister's house in Grosvenor Place. The servants told him that the ladies were at lunch. "I can't eat lunch," he said. "Tell them that I am in the drawing-room."

"He has come to see you," said Lady Laura, as soon as the servant had left the room.

"I hope not," said Violet.

"Do not say that."

"But I do say it. I hope he has not come to see me;—that is,

" Laura, would you mind leaving me and Miss Effingham alone for a few minutes?"

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not to see me specially. Of course I cannot pretend not to know what you mean."

"He may think it civil to call if he has heard that you are in town," said Lady Laura, after a pause.

"If it be only that, I will be civil in return;—as sweet as May to him. If it be really only that, and if I were sure of it, I should be really glad to see him." Then they finished their lunch, and Lady Laura got up and led the way to the drawing-room.

"I hope you remember," said she, gravely, "that you might be a saviour to him."

"I do not believe in girls being saviours to men. It is the man who should be the saviour to the girl. If I marry at all, I have the right to expect that protection shall be given to me,—not that I shall have to give it."

"Violet, you are determined to misrepresent what I mean."

Lord Chiltern was walking about the room, and did not sit down when they entered. The ordinary greetings took place, and Miss Effingham made some remark about the frost. "But it seems to be going," she said, "and I suppose that you will soon be at work again?"

"Yes;—I shall hunt to-morrow," said Lord Chiltern.

"And the next day, and the next, and the next," said Violet, "till about the middle of April;—and then your period of misery will begin!"

"Exactly," said Lord Chiltern. "I have nothing but hunting that I can call an occupation."

"Why don't you make one?" said his sister.

"I mean to do so, if it be possible. Laura, would you mind leaving me and Miss Effingham alone for a few minutes?"

Lady Laura got up, and so also did Miss Effingham. "For what purpose?" said the latter. "It cannot be for any good purpose."

"At any rate I wish it, and I will not harm you." Lady Laura was now going, but paused before she reached the door. "Laura, will you do as I ask you?" said the brother. Then Lady Laura went.

"It was not that I feared you would harm me, Lord Chiltern," said Violet.

"No;—I know it was not. But what I say is always said awkwardly. An hour ago I did not know that you were in town, but when I was told the news I came at once. My father told me."

"I am so glad that you see your father."

"I have not spoken to him for months before, and probably may not speak to him for months again. But there is one point, Violet, on which he and I agree."

"I hope there will soon be many."

"It is possible,—but I fear not probable. Look here, Violet,"—and he looked at her with all his eyes, till it seemed to her that he was all eyes, so great was the intensity of his gaze;—"I should

scorn myself were I to permit myself to come before you with a plea for your favour founded on my father's whims. My father is unreasonable, and has been very unjust to me. He has ever believed evil of me, and has believed it often when all the world knew that he was wrong. I care little for being reconciled to a father who has been so cruel to me."

"He loves me dearly, and is my friend. I would rather that you should not speak against him to me."

"You will understand, at least, that I am asking nothing from you because he wishes it. Laura probably has told you that you may make things straight by becoming my wife."

"She has,—certainly, Lord Chiltern."

"It is an argument that she should never have used. It is an argument to which you should not listen for a moment. Make things straight, indeed! Who can tell? There would be very little made straight by such a marriage, if it were not that I loved you. Violet, that is my plea, and my only one. I love you so well that I do believe that if you took me I should return to the old ways, and become as other men are, and be in time as respectable, as stupid,—and perhaps as ill-natured as old Lady Baldock herself."

"My poor aunt!"

"You know she says worse things of me than that. Now, dearest, you have heard all that I have to say to you." As he spoke he came close to her, and put out his hand,—but she did not touch it. "I have no other argument to use,—not a word more to say. As I came here in the cab I was turning it over in my mind that I might find what best I should say. But, after all, there is nothing more to be said than that."

"The words make no difference," she replied.

"Not unless they be so uttered as to force a belief. I do love you. I know no other reason but that why you should be my wife. I have no other excuse to offer for coming to you again. You are the one thing in the world that to me has any charm. Can you be surprised that I should be persistent in asking for it?" He was looking at her still with the same gaze, and there seemed to be a power in his eye from which she could not escape. He was still standing with his right hand out, as though expecting, or at least hoping, that her hand might be put into his.

"How am I to answer you?" she said.

"With your love, if you can give it to me. Do you remember how you swore once that you would love me for ever and always."

"You should not remind me of that. I was a child then,—a naughty child," she added, smiling; "and was put to bed for what I did on that day."

"Be a child still."

"Ah, if we but could!"

"And have you no other answer to make me?"

"Of course I must answer you. You are entitled to an answer. Lord Chiltern, I am sorry that I cannot give you the love for which you ask."

"Never?"

"Never."

"Is it myself personally, or what you have heard of me, that is so hateful to you?"

"Nothing is hateful to me. I have never spoken of hate. I shall always feel the strongest regard for my old friend and playfellow. But there are many things which a woman is bound to consider before she allows herself so to love a man that she can consent to become his wife."

"Allow herself! Then it is a matter entirely of calculation."

"I suppose there should be some thought in it, Lord Chiltern.'

There was now a pause, and the man's hand was at last allowed to drop, as there came no response to the proffered grasp. He walked once or twice across the room before he spoke again, and then he stopped himself closely opposite to her.

"I shall never try again," he said.

"It will be better so," she replied.

"There is something to me unmanly in a man's persecuting a girl. Just tell Laura, will you, that it is all over; and she may as well tell my father. Good-bye."

She then tendered her hand to him, but he did not take it,—probably did not see it, and at once left the room and the house.

"And yet I believe you love him," Lady Laura said to her friend in her anger, when they discussed the matter immediately on Lord Chiltern's departure.

"You have no right to say that, Laura."

"I have a right to my belief, and I do believe it. I think you love him, and that you lack the courage to risk yourself in trying to save him."

"Is a woman bound to marry a man if she love him?"

"Yes, she is," replied Lady Laura impetuously, without thinking of what she was saying; "that is, if she be convinced that she also is loved."

"Whatever be the man's character;—whatever be the circumstances? Must she do so, whatever friends may say to the contrary? Is there to be no prudence in marriage?"

"There may be a great deal too much prudence," said Lady Laura.

"That is true. There is certainly too much prudence if a woman marries prudently, but without love." Violet intended by this no attack upon her friend,—had not had present in her mind at the moment any idea of Lady Laura's special prudence in marrying Mr.

Konnedy; but Lady Laura felt it keenly, and knew at once that an arrow had been shot which had wounded her.

"We shall get nothing," she said, "by descending to personalities with each other."

"I meant none, Laura."

"I suppose it is always hard," said Lady Laura, "for any one person to judge altogether of the mind of another. If I have said anything severe of your refusal of my brother, I retract it. I only wish that it could have been otherwise."

Lord Chiltern, when he left his sister's house, walked through the slush and dirt to a haunt of his in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden, and there he remained through the whole afternoon and evening. A certain Captain Clutterbuck joined him, and dined with him. He told nothing to Captain Clutterbuck of his sorrow, but Captain Clutterbuck could see that he was unhappy.

"Let's have another bottle of 'cham,'" said Captain Clutterbuck, when their dinner was nearly over. "'Cham' is the only thing to screw one up when one is down a peg."

"You can have what you like," said Lord Chiltern; "but I shall have some brandy-and-water."

"The worst of brandy-and-water is, that one gets tired of it before the night is over," said Captain Clutterbuck.

Nevertheless, Lord Chiltern did go down to Peterborough the next day by the hunting train, and rode his horse Bonebreaker so well in that famous run from Sutton springs to Gidding that after the run young Piles,—of the house of Piles, Sarsnet, and Gingham,—offered him three hundred pounds for the animal.

"He isn't worth above fifty," said Lord Chiltern.

"But I'll give you the three hundred," said Piles.

"You couldn't ride him if you'd got him," said Lord Chiltern.

"Oh, couldn't I!" said Piles. But Mr. Piles did not continue the conversation, contenting himself with telling his friend Grogram that that red devil Chiltern was as drunk as a lord.

SAINT PAULS.

MARCH, 1868.

ALL FOR GREED.

CHAPTER XVII.

IS HE MAD?

YES, indeed, Monsieur le Curé was sorely perplexed. The more he thought of it the more he felt persuaded that there was something beyond mental derangement in old Prosper's behaviour. Of proof of this, when the Curé came to cross-examine himself as to what he had actually seen and heard, he could find none. Prosper had always been a strange, gloomy man, weak-witted and superstitious, and nothing was more likely than that what had happened since his master's death should have completely upset his reasoning faculties. Any doctor accustomed to treat lunatics would regard it as quite an ordinary case; and yet, in spite of this, the Curé felt that there was more and worse in it than this came to, and the thought pursued and haunted him day and night.

In order to recall more clearly to his mind all the minutest circumstances connected with the murder of Martin Prévost, the Curé contrived, very ingeniously as he thought, to provoke conversation upon that subject with all those who had at the time been called upon to investigate the case. From all that he could gather by talking to the Maire, and the Juge de Paix, and the Doctor, and the Brigadier de Gendarmerie, never was a fact more satisfactorily established than that the murder of Martin Prévost was committed by some one from without,—some one whose mere object was to rob the old man of his money, and who had successfully escaped all pursuit.

As to Prosper Morel,—beyond the fact that had led to his arrest, namely, the fact of his having a short time previously vowed vengeance upon his master for an offence which was shown to have been condoned and forgotten,—beyond that one fact, nothing in all the evidence collected pointed at him; and, on the contrary, the whole of that evidence had so thoroughly excluded any notion of his culpa-

bility, that his preventive imprisonment was a subject of regret to every one; for it was generally supposed that it had had a fatal effect upon the old Breton's mind and health.

The incident which had, at the time, struck every one as alone likely to afford a clue to the criminal, had remained wholly unfathomable. The footsteps, namely, which led from the house to the garden, and ceased on the edge of the little stream, or rather ditch, close to the Cholet high road, had never been made to coincide with boot or shoe wearable by any individual connected far or near with old Prévost or his house.

"I know what I have thought sometimes since then," said one day the Brigadier de Gendarmerie, in a moment of supreme confidence; "but one never likes to cast a suspicion on any one;—above all, when one belongs to the Executive Authority!" And "Monsieur Frédéri" drew himself up majestically.

"Did you suspect any one in D——, then?" asked the Curé, with a shudder.

"At the time, no," was the reply; "but since, I have often thought that——" he paused. "Well, Monsieur le Curé, to you I don't mind confiding my secret thoughts. If I had been Monsieur le Juge d'Instruction, I would have had that sharper, Léon Duprez, arrested." And as he uttered these last words he lowered his voice.

"Léon Duprez?" echoed the Curé, with a start of surprise; "why, what could possibly make you suspect him?"

"Nothing, Monsieur le Curé; I repeat it, at the time, nothing; but have you never reflected that he left D—— immediately after the crime, and we now know under what circumstances he left it, and what a pressing need he must have been under at that identical moment for a few thousand francs?"

The Curé stared at the gendarme in mute astonishment.

"Yes," continued the latter; "my suspicion is so strong, that if the scoundrel were not away in Australia, if he were anywhere within my reach, I would now do everything in my power to get him arrested, so persuaded do I feel that, in some way or other, he had to do with the murder of old Monsieur Prévost."

This was a totally new light to the Curé, and only contributed to perplex him more and more; and, strange to say, instead of delivering him from all preoccupation as far as the woodcutter was concerned, it only made those preoccupations more complicated and less avoidable. What did the Breton mean when he raved about "the other"? Who was that "other"?

Though on the day of his strange interview with Prosper Morel, up in the woods, the Curé had ended,—after the bûcheron had regained his senses,—by calming the old man's agitation, and inducing him to listen to him quietly enough, still he had not advanced one step in the direction of any practical discovery. He had talked to Prosper for

nearly an hour, and could not avoid thinking he had done him good; but the principal sign of improvement on the woodcutter's part was afforded by silence.

When once Prosper had been brought to look upon the Curé as a friend, and to acknowledge him in the flesh as his spiritual pastor, a certain load appeared to be taken off his mind,—a certain dread to be mitigated. By degrees, as the Curé spoke and advised, and tried to soothe and comfort him, Prosper seemed to undergo a species of physical relaxation; his nerves ceased their over-tension, he stretched his arms and lags as people do after long illness and fever, and closed his eyes frequently and as with a sensation of relief.

These signs induced the Curé, while Prosper was present, to incline towards the belief that the old man was merely a victim to temporary insanity, or simply hallucination brought on by the tragic events with which he had been indirectly connected, and kept up by the gloom of his solitary life. But when he reflected upon Prosper's conduct, and recurred to his manner, to his look, to the tone of his voice, an instinct awoke that would not be hushed—an instinct that for ever told him there was more in all this than madness.

All he had gained was, that the wretched old man had listened to him, and had seemingly comprehended what he had said. Naturally, after bringing the Breton to accept his interference, and to submit to his counsels, there was, according to the lights of a sincerely pious Catholic priest, but one course to which he could endeavour to lead him;—to confess. He could teach him no other lesson save that only one: "Repent, confess, and thy sins shall be forgiven thee." The Curé could teach him no other lesson, and that he taught him.

The woodcutter listened in silence, but he more than once muttered to himself, "Confess! confess!" and he shivered as with a fit of ague.

"And thy sins shall be forgiven thee," slowly and impressively added the priest.

But further than that he did not get.

Unfortunately, in small places like D——, nothing can be kept secret, and a distorted account of the Curé's visit to old Prosper's abode began to circulate amongst the gossips. Whence did it come? Who knows? Perhaps from the brigadier—perhaps from old Lise, "Monsieur le Curé's Lise," to whom, after fifteen years passed under the same roof, her master did now and then just hint that he was troubled or perplexed. However, circulate the story did, and with so many embellishments, that the old Breton was transformed into an object of popular curiosity, and, as the days were fine and beginning to lengthen, knots of mischievous boys would troop off into the woods and organise expeditions to "La Chapelle à Prosper," as they termed it; and the old man's extraordinary demeanour, his "mummeries and antics," as they called them, came to be a grand subject of diversion for the godless crew.

But the behaviour of the bûcheron was altered now. Instead of stalking about and chaunting Psalms and Litanies, as he had been used to do, he would sit for hours together, with closed eyes, his chin resting on his clasped hands, and his elbows on his knees. He appeared absorbed in meditation. He was perfectly harmless, and sought in no way to punish his youthful tormentors, but almost seemed to look upon them as a part of the penance he was doomed to undergo. When he believed himself most alone he would suddenly hear a mocking voice calling him by name, and as he turned round, a curly pate, or a smudgy visage, would show itself from behind the tree-stems or the bushes, and grin and make faces at him. They popped out upon him on all sides, dogged his steps, hopped across his path, and when they had found that he opposed no resistance to their tricks, they, with all the cowardice of "little-boy" nature, set to work to torment him systematically. Nor was it only the very small imps who indulged in this occupation. Their example was soon followed by the lads of fifteen or sixteen, and to these were also too often added the lazy loiterers who, in small provincial towns, have "nothing particular" to do except lounge away their afternoons at the "café," reading the "Siécle."

The great amusement was to call upon the woodcutter to confess. First one, and then another, would jump out of the brushwood, and cry out:

"Why don't you go to confession, Prosper?"

"You had better confess!" would add a third.

"If you'll only confess to me, Prosper, I'll give you absolution at once," would observe a fourth.

And the effect was invariably the same. The man listened silently, cast a haggard look around,—very much the look of a frightened animal,—and then rose, and with shambling gait went up to his blackened board behind the shed, and began to write upon it broken and half-illegible sentences in white chalk. Once established at this work, nothing disturbed him more. Hours would elapse, and he would go on alternately rubbing out words already written, and writing fresh ones in their place.

Day after day people talked of the bûcheron's madness; and at market, and at the café, it was a common subject of discourse; but the Curé was more than ever perplexed, and uneasy in his mind.

"It is a very extraordinary case this of Prosper Morel's," said he one day to young Morville, whom he met accidentally walking towards the High Street of D——; "very extraordinary and perplexing."

"I see nothing in it either very extraordinary or very perplexing," replied Raoul calmly. "The old man's head was always a weak one: what has passed has fairly turned it,—as it well might,—and your own

sermon of the Fête des Morts has supplied the one particular image to which the diseased brain has clung ever since. Such cases are far more frequent than you fancy; above all, with such races as those Bas-Bretons,—gloomy, and easily led towards fixed ideas."

"Raoul," said the Curé, after a few steps taken side by side in silence; "old Prosper is no more mad than you or I are. That is my conviction."

Young Morville expressed his entire dissent from the Curé's opinion, and they again walked on together in silence till they reached the part of the street just opposite La Maison Prévost. "Good-bye, Raoul," said the Curé, with a slight touch of sadness. "I am going in there. Good-bye; I have seen but little of you since you came. I hardly think you have come once to the Presbytère."

"If you knew what a state my father was in, you would, perhaps, excuse me," rejoined the young man. "I really do not know even now what decision to take. He will probably never recover, and my month's congé is nearly up."

"And then you must go back to Paris?" remarked the Curé. "Or have you any chance of lengthening your leave?"

"I fear not. I have only a week left. I wish, instead of Paris, I were going to Australia." The last words were uttered in a tone of great dejection.

"To Australia?" echoed the Curé, with a start. "Why Australia?"

"Only because it is so much farther off," said young Morville. But there was a bitterness in the look with which he accompanied the words, and altogether an air about him that the Curé could not account for, and that he disliked.

They separated, and Monsieur le Curé, crossing over to La Maison Prévost, told Madame Jean, when she opened the door, that it was absolutely necessary he should see Monsieur Richard. "Of course he won't object to receiving you, but he is very nervous and weak to-day," was Madame Jean's reply, as she ushered the Curé into her master's room. Weak enough and nervous enough he looked, to be sure, as he rose from his fireside to greet the parish priest, and offer him the seat in the opposite corner.

"No, thank you," said the Curé. "I should faint from the heat. Your room is an oven. You should open the window, Monsieur Richard; such a temperature is enough to take all the strength out of you."

"I have none left in me, alas!" rejoined Monsieur Richard in a whining voice. "I get worse and worse, and I believe I shall be forced to change the air, and try Cannes or Hyères for a few weeks. My cough is so troublesome, my breathing so bad, and I cannot sleep."

"Fine weather will do much, my good Monsieur Richard, and we

shall soon be having that; but you must excuse me if I come to trouble you upon some very sad business, but where really you are the only person who can act. Touching old Prosper Morel——"

Monsieur Richard turned round towards the fire, and answered fractiously, "Mon Dieu! mon Dieu! how cruel everybody is! The poor old creature is mad, stark mad, and I will not have him molested with my consent. Do have him left alone. Do let him do what he likes; he can't live long, and he hurts nobody."

"Monsieur Richard," continued the Curé, gravely—"Prosper is not mad; that is my deliberate conviction, and he ought, at all events, to be examined by some medical man."

"Not mad, my dear Monsieur le Curé!" repeated Richard Prévost, peevishly. "Why, his madness is notorious,—is the talk of the town. What would be the use of a doctor?"

"The use of a doctor would be to define clearly what is the real mental condition of the man," retorted the Curé. "If he is insane, he ought to be shut up and attended to; if he is not——"

"Well, what then?" inquired Monsieur Richard, almost angrily. "What then?"

"Why, then," rejoined the Curé, slowly, "the case ought to be looked into in another way. Prosper is perfectly calm. All his vehemence has subsided, but he is under the impression of some horrible deed, and he persistently, and day after day, proclaims himself a murderer." Monsieur Richard shrugged his shoulders, and threw two more logs on the fire. "Prosper's behaviour is now such as, in my mind, to call for some notice from you, Monsieur Richard, as the nearest relative of the murdered man. He passes his days and nights in writing upon the board behind his strange abode up yonder, the confession of his guilt. Fifty times over you will see the words, 'Prosper did it,' written in large characters; and 'God be merciful to Prosper, the murderer!'"

"And upon such evident marks of insanity as those, you would persecute a poor wretch of this kind?" retorted Richard Prévost.

"That is not all," urged the Curé. "He invariably alludes to some one else,—says he was not alone,—says there was another person mixed up with him in the crime."

"Monsieur le Curé," said Richard Prévost, drawing himself closer into the fire, "all the circumstances of my poor uncle's death were minutely investigated at the time, and if anything was proved, it was Prosper Morel's innocence; and I will not have the poor old fellow's last days tortured with my consent. That the murderer of my uncle escaped is clear. One day, perhaps, he may be discovered,—people say murderers always are,—but I should think it a positive crime to re-institute fresh proceedings now, upon no surer a basis than the ravings of a wretched idiot who has already lost his reason through first ill-founded suspicions."

The Curé argued and argued, but could make no way whatever against Monsieur Richard.

"So you will not take any further proceedings in this matter?" said the priest, when he rose to go.

"None whatever," answered Richard Prévost. "There has been misery enough. Let poor old Prosper be left in peace. He won't live long, probably."

As the Curé was passing out of the room, he turned round, with his hand still upon the door; "Remember my words, Monsieur Richard," he added gravely, "Prosper Morel is not mad."

CHAPTER XVIII.

ST. MARK'S DAY.

One thing was clear to every one, and that was, the alteration that had taken place in young Morville. He had used to be so gay and joyous, so en train, as the French say, so up to everything! and now he was absorbed and absent, looked exceedingly ill, and moved about as though oppressed by some overwhelming care. Far from seeking the society of any of the people in D——, he apparently avoided all society; for, as the Curé had truly remarked, he did not go near him, who had been from early youth his best and surest friend, and he neglected the family at the Château, where he had hitherto had a second home.

Monsieur de Vérancour did not spare his observations upon Raoul's conduct, and was for ever commenting upon it in a way that terribly alarmed and pained Vévette. "It is the same with all those young fellows," the Vicomte would say; "the very moment they get up to Paris it's all over. They tumble into some mischief or other,—mostly some infamous woman at the bottom of it all, some Dame aux Camélias, or some drôlesse of the demi-monde, which is even worse; and then come the string of embarrassments and misfortunes, play, debts, and God knows what all. They borrow what they can't pay, and they know they can't; but that's no matter; they go on all the same, and hope some miracle will be performed in their favour; and the end of it all is, the ruin of papa and mamma and the whole family, who have to pay for the young gentleman's misdeeds. But when there is neither papa nor mamma nor family, the end is another one,—disgrace, or suicide, or both; mighty lucky when it isn't dishonour, or the Bagne for forgery: but it's always the same thing, and if ever I saw any one who bore all the marks of having got into a mess, it is Raoul."

And then the Vicomte usually wound up by some bitter remarks upon the people of the present day who go themselves, or send their sons, up to Paris to make money, and said how infinitely preferable was the

quiet life and honest mediocrity of the province, where your ancestors had lived and died before you! "It might be dull," opined the Vicomte self-righteously; "it might be humdrum, but it was honourable, and according to the traditions of old French ways and customs!"

Monsieur de Vérancour never seemed to think it otherwise than "highly honourable" to contemplate the sale of your child to a man she despised; and such bargains formed part of what he thought the superior morality of provincial life.

Now, poor Vévette was breaking her heart all this while, and suffering martyrdom in silence. What she heard whispered about her, and what her father said aloud, would have been nothing had her own heart not failed her. But her own heart had told her, long before others spoke, that something was wrong, very wrong, with Raoul. A girl, brought up as girls are in France, may sometimes love quickly, yet be very long before she knows that she loves. The everyday life of respectable families is singularly flat and monotonous, and helps to lead a girl on from the cradle to the grave in ignorance of what lay hidden in her soul. But if once the accident happen, if once the calm be broken,—beware!

And thus it had been with Vévette; she had been true to her teachers so long as she could be so, so long as she lived their life instead of her own; but as soon as the measure of her suffering taught her the measure of her love, as soon as she knew beyond all doubt that she loved Raoul better than everything else upon earth, and that for his loss Paradise itself would not compensate, then the aspects and the aims and purports of her life changed, and she was another than the self she had hitherto been. Had any one about her really cared to discover what was passing in the poor child's physical and mental condition, the perturbation would have been easily seen. She had grown miserably thin from anxiety and sleeplessness, but her cheek had a flush and her eye had a brilliancy that mislead those uninterested in her happiness. The excitement within threw its fever-mantle round her, and they took it for bloom.

"How wonderfully well your sister looks," said the Vicomte to Félicie; "she is growing extremely handsome. I never saw her look so well, and she is so lively." "Yes," would answer the latter, "she is even too lively; she is restless and brusque; she was not used to be so, but I suppose it is one of the changes girls sometimes go through. It is very lucky she is not called upon to make a great sacrifice for others,—to immolate herself; for I do not think she would be equal to it. Vévette is becoming self-willed; indeed, almost wilful." And so saying, Mademoiselle Félicie would sigh, and look full of compunction for her sister's sins.

On the 25th of April there was a kind of fête at D——. It was the feast of St. Marc, which had been time out of mind kept as a holiday in that locality, and at which it was customary that every one

in the neighbourhood should be present. The amusements of the fête were all grouped together in the fields that lay between D—— and the village of St. Philbert; and upon a piece of land visible from the terrace of the Château, and called the Pré St. Marc, were to be found all the usual attractions of such popular gatherings as these. There were the menageries, and the giants and dwarfs, and learned dogs, or pigs, or birds, and magicians, and Dutch toupies, and gingerbread-stalls; and there, also, was the space set aside for dancing, under the wide-spreading boughs of two enormous chestnut trees. When night came, all this was to be illuminated with coloured lamps, but the festivities of the night were left chiefly to the enjoyment of the lower orders, or to individuals of the masculine sex alone among their betters. The fashionable hour for attending the fête was late in the afternoon, from four to six or half-past,—what determined provincials still called before supper. At that hour all the notables were sure to be found congregating together round the roots of the chestnut trees, and either looking on at the dancers or taking part in the dance; for it was the custom that upon this occasion there should be a perfect confusion of ranks.

Monsieur le Maire and his spouse, and the Juge de Paix, and the notary, and all the other dignitaries of D——, had already appeared upon the Pré St. Marc, when the Vicomte was seen approaching with his two daughters and Monsieur le Curé, and followed by Richard Prévost and the doctor, who had been expressing his satisfaction at the improvement in Monsieur Richard's health. Besides these, there were several visitors from châteaux in the environs; and one gossip,—but then that was that mischievous woman Madame Joséphine le Vaillant, the wife of the Juge de Paix,—declared she had seen Monsieur de Champmorin lounging about.

However that may be, Félicie did assuredly look pretty and graceful enough to have been worth any suitor's while to woo. As to Vévette, her beauty took people by surprise, for they were not used to "think anything" of her, as the common phrase runs, and it was strange to be positively dazzled by what you have never been taught to regard as a light.

The sisters were dressed nearly alike, excepting only that the elder wore blue, and the younger pink ribbons. Both had on white dresses and straw hats; and whilst the soft colours of her blue streamers harmonised so delightfully with Félicie's delicate even complexion, and light, wavy, chestnut hair, that you could not help seeing she had studied her effects, the rosy hue of Vévette's trimmings, that would have been so set off by her thick flaxen tresses, paled under the damask flush of her burning cheek and the scarlet of her unquiet lip.

It was a general remark how much better poor Monsieur Richard looked, and everybody seemed glad thereat; for,—excepting the

purchase of the little carriage from Tours,—Richard Prévost had given no sign of enjoying his wealth, and his weak health was such an obstacle to his ever thoroughly enjoying it, that his neighbours were pleased with him, and patronised him, and morally patted him on the back.

When the usual observations on the weather, and the fact of this being the very finest St. Marc ever remembered, were at an end, one of the first subjects of general conversation was the insanity of old Prosper.

"I really am tired to death of hearing that poor unfortunate old creature talked of incessantly," said Félicie. "It is precisely what is so odious in provincial life; one never hears the last of anything, however trivial or unimportant it may happen to be." This remark had been made to Monsieur le Curé and Richard Prévost, who were both standing beside Mademoiselle de Vérancour when she spoke. But it was also heard by Monsieur le Maire, who by no means agreed in this system of disparaging the province.

"It is possible, mademoiselle," said he, "that in a great centre like Paris crime itself may pass unnoticed, but I am old-fashioned enough to prefer provincial ways, and not to quarrel with what after all only proves an extreme susceptibility to the state of public morality;" and then he, too, launched out into a tirade about the old French ways and customs, and "tradition," and drew from it all the plain inference that crime was the daily bread of the Parisians.

"Crime! my dear sir," retorted Félicie, with that peculiar mixture of contempt and condescension she sometimes assumed, "but there is no question of crime in all this; it is a question only of insanity, and the poor old man up yonder will be probably worried to death by the gossips of D——."

"I assure you, mademoiselle," persisted the Maire, "it is a most extraordinary case, if all that is reported be true."

The Curé and Richard Prévost had left the little group to speak to some fresh arrivals from St. Philbert, and the Vicomte, who had rejoined his daughters, now took part in the conversation. "It really does seem to me," said he, "that what it is the fashion now to call the public, does, as usual, meddle most impertinently in what does not concern it. Surely as long as the one person who is alone entitled to interfere remains silent, no one else has any right to raise his voice. If Monsieur Richard is convinced of that miserable old man's innocence, whose business can it possibly be to accuse or suspect him?" But the Maire was inclined to support the cause of what is called public justice, and he was beginning to argue the point with the Vicomte, when the band charged with the musical department of the fête plunged with such diabolical energy into a contre-danse, that no more talk was just then practicable.

Monsieur le Maire requested the honour of Mademoiselle Félicie's

hand, whilst,—the Mairesse being infirm and unable to dance,—Monsieur de Vérancour performed vis-à-vis to them with a very portly and consequential personage, Madame Valentin, the grocer's wife, out and out the richest bourgeoise in D——, and reputed to entertain the most advanced opinions both in religion and politics. It had even been whispered that Madame Valentin was encouraging her husband to lend money to a certain lawyer of Republican tendencies, who dreamed of setting up a liberal newspaper, to be called le Drapeau du Department, with a view to waging war upon the Préfet's pet organ. However, notwithstanding her political bias, the epicier's spouse seemed well pleased with her cavalier, for she laughed with all her teeth, which were fine, as she ducked down through the chaine Anglaise, and came back with evident glee to her partner after an en avant deux.

Meanwhile our friend Madame Jean had been led forth among the side couples by the brigadier, who was observed invariably to encircle her waist with his arm and perform a pirouette à la militaire with her, each time that the figure of the quadrille placed him face to face with his partner. "She won't marry him any more for all that," whispered the lanky over-grown son of the Juge de Paix to Mère Jubine's Louison, with whom he was dancing.

But Louison was busy admiring Monsieur Richard.

Yes! there was some one for whom Richard Prévost was not "poor Monsieur Richard;" some one for whom he was a grand gentleman, and the type of all elegance and fashion!

As we have said, Richard Prévost was not ill-looking; he appeared to be weakly,—that was all,—and was pre-eminently what the Provençal terms "not much of a man;" but for the old washerwoman's daughter, herself the very handsomest girl of her class in D——, this very delicacy was refinement; and Monsieur Richard, with his blond hair elaborately curled by the coiffeur, and his glossy whiskers, his blue cravat, and pale lilac kid gloves, his superb watch-chain, and with clouds of perfume over all, was the very finest gentleman she had ever seen, or would ever have a chance of seeing. And so Mère Jubine's Louison was all eyes for Monsieur Richard, and paid no attention to what the pale-faced lanky son of the Juge de Paix was saying to her about Madame Jean and her military lover.

Just before the contre-danse had begun, Raoul de Morville had passed close to the group where the Vicomte and his daughters were standing. Greetings had been exchanged, and as Monsieur le Maire carried off Félicie as his partner, Vévette had turned round as if with a sudden impulse;—"Have you forsworn dancing, Raoul?" she asked, trying to smile very gaily. "We used always to dance together at the St. Marc when we were children."

"Shall we do so now?" was the answer; and Raoul went towards the dancers with Vévette on his arm.

While they danced together, they never spoke once, but once their hands met; hers lingered in his, and with that touch all words were made superfluous.

When the contre-danse was over, they were for a few minutes separated from the crowd. "Why have you never been near us?" inquired Vévette in a low tone. "Have you forgotten us?"

"Forgotten you, Vévette!" The way in which the words were uttered forced her to look at Raoul, and when their eyes had met she had no further need to be reassured.

"Then, Raoul," she added, taking courage, "what is the reason you keep away? What has happened?"

"Oh, Vévette," he rejoined, with an accent of what seemed almost like despair, "so much has happened. Little enough, perhaps, for others, but for me everything;" and then he paused, while she looked and listened in breathless anxiety. "Suppose," he continued, "that all my hopes were at an end; that I could never look forward to our marriage. What would remain to me if I consented to live on, but to go away as far as I possibly could;—to put the seas between us? If all possible idea of your one day being mine had to be given up, my duty, however hard, would be to avoid you, and my last chance would be to fly to the end of the world—to New Zealand or Australia."

"No, Raoul, not that," was the rejoinder, but given in a voice he had never heard come from those lips before.

"Alas! and why not?" he asked mournfully.

"Because I should die if you did." They looked for a second steadfastly at each other; but the Vévette who stood before Raoul now he had never known. All colour had flown from her lips and cheek, and the flame in her eyes had darkened, as it were; the truth had compelled her; the shy convent-bred girl was gone; and in her place was the passionate woman, really loving unto death.

It was not in masculine nature not for one instant to be enraptured at the avowal thus desperately made, and for one instant Raoul's whole countenance glowed with the glory of being loved. "Then, my own," he resumed fondly, "you must know what has happened, you must know all; you alone must decide what shall be our future. Come what will, in three days I must be in Paris, but——"

"In Paris, in three days?" gasped Vévette.

"That must be, darling," he replied soothingly; "but that is a minor evil. I will tell you the cause of all my misery, and I swear to abide by your decision. Don't look so terrified, love; listen to me; I have——" But all further conversation was cut short by Monsieur le Maire, who strutted up to solicit the honour of Mademoiselle Vevette's hand.

When that quadrille was over, the eternal topic of old Prosper Morel was recurred to, for the benefit of a visitor at a neighbouring

château to whom the entire story was new. "Do you know, Monsieur le Vicomte," urged Monsieur le Maire, harking back to his old argument of "public justice,"—"Do you know that what Joseph le Vaillant tells is passing strange all the same?"

"Oh! so you've been inspecting poor old Prosper, have you?" asked Monsieur de Vérancour, with a supercilious glance at the Juge de Paix's son.

"I went up there yesterday," replied the lanky youth.

"Well, and what did you see that was so wonderful?"

"Oh, only Prosper's drawings, and the same words over and over, 'Prosper did it,' and then the date, '14th of October.' His new mania is to draw a kind of figure of a guillotine with three great capital letters under it, a P, an M, and an R. Always these three same; and sometimes they stand under a guillotine, sometimes flames are pictured under them: but always these three letters are repeated; and over the guillotine he mostly writes, 'Expiation!' And then he sits down before the drawing and looks at it till your flesh creeps as you look at him. Is not that a queer thing, Monsieur le Vicomte?"

"An M, that's Morel," said Monsieur de Vérancour, "and P, that's Prosper—but what's R for?"

"Well, perhaps Retribution!" opined the Juge de Paix.

"I will go up in a day or two and see to all this myself," said Monsieur le Maire. "I can't go to-morrow, but I will positively go the day after."

The Vicomte shrugged his shoulders.

"Poor devil!" said he, "they'll torture him to death."

"I incline to think the Maire is quite right," observed the Curé gravely. "I can't help believing there is more in all this than you fancy."

CHAPTER XIX.

PROSPER'S ARREST.

Upon the face of it was there enough to account for Raoul de Morville's sore depression of spirits? That question touches the individual appreciation of suffering which is different in each human being. What to one is but a feather, may to the other be a weight beneath which he is crushed. If young Morville's past life, and the hopes upon which his whole heart had centred, be taken into consideration, it is certain that he had good cause to feel exceedingly unhappy.

If the circumstances wherewith love is surrounded in different countries be well examined, it will be seen that nothing can be more various than the aspects of the passion which many people falsely believe to be "the same everywhere."

If a man without fortune love a girl without a farthing, in England,

need he despair? No! for he has recourses open to him: he can work and win her, he can emigrate to one of those many lands where English is spoken, and by dint of toil, time, and endurance, it is more than probable he may end by gaining enough to enable him to unite himself to her without whom life seems to him worthless. At all events he has society and public opinion on his side. For his energy and for her constancy everybody will think higher of the couple who wish to marry for love.

But not so in France. In the first place, the man who, without money, wishes to gain it in order to marry the woman he has chosen, has a marvellously small choice of means whereby to achieve his aim. If he has financial aptitudes, no scruples, and great luck, he may by some stroke on the bourse, in which he has risked honour,—in case of failure,—achieve fortune; but the man capable of that is mostly a man incapable of the devotion we suppose him setting out to serve. For a chivalrous minded man,—and the man who resolves to win the girl he loves is that,—it is hard to see any resource in France. How he is to achieve independence in a country where every single field for activity, large or small, is railed in and set aside, and where nothing is open to individual energy, it is hard to see; but what is worse is, that he has society, and the opinion of all the men and women in it, against him. He must do whatever he does without ever allowing his motive to be guessed, or he is lost. His friends would set him down for a fool, and the rest of the world for something near akin to a perturbator of general morality.

All that esteem, all that sympathetic encouragement which are so necessary to the man who has to fight a hard fight, are denied in France to the man who dreams of marrying for love. He becomes a species of Pariah, whom it is unsafe to let inside your doors. If he, being without money, chose to love a girl who has plenty, that is quite another thing. If he wins her, he will be applauded because the love can be denied. If a very rich man, on the other hand, be resolved to marry a woman who is poor, that again will be tolerated;—though not viewed so favourably as the preceding case, because it gives doubly bad example; first, to rich sons of families who, independently of their parents, may take to marrying penniless wives, and next, to dowerless girls, who may nourish illusions and become dangerous to the peace of respectable families.

No! The fitness of things lies in the union of money with money. That is according to rule. What is so also, is the union of high birth with wealth. In this arrangement also there is a fitness pleasant to contemplate, for there is an exchange of valuables. Something is sold and something bought, and it is altogether a business transaction,—in which a Frenchman tells you you find "a guarantee."

But in a marriage of poverty with poverty there is no "guarantee," and the love which induces it is only an "aggravating circumstance."

Now, Raoul's position was in this respect the worst of all possible positions. He had conceived the mad idea of winning by his own exertions the hand of a girl who was as poor as himself. He had no excuse, for he had been brought up with Félicie and Vévette, and knew their pecuniary situation as well as he knew his own. Of course, if Mademoiselle Geneviève de Vérancour shared his absurd notions, it was wholly and entirely his fault; for, unless he had forced them upon her, how should a "well-born" girl, educated in a convent too! ever entertain any idea so utterly wrong as that of marrying for love? All the blame would be Raoul's; and had he any, the remotest chance, of earning for himself the even relative independence that would enable him to aspire to the hand of his beloved?

Perhaps there had been a time, not far off, when he had thought that his hopes might be realised; but what were his present prospects? He had twelve hundred francs a year for working hard in a public office for eight hours a day! Sixty pounds per annum would not go far to maintain a wife, let alone children. And what were his other chances? Perhaps promotion in six or eight years, and a salary of seventy-five, or it might be a hundred pounds yearly;—for he had no "protection."

All this was disheartening enough, and Raoul was disheartened. He loved Vévette with his whole heart and soul, and could see nothing in life worth having if she failed him. But he sickened at the notion of waiting for long years. He wanted Vévette to be his now; now, while he and she were young, and that its first bloom was on their love. More even than the cheerlessness of his prospects he felt the hardness of being obliged to hide his one object in life as though it were a crime. As a man who lives for a passion unconnected with ambition or interest, Raoul was a man out of all communion with his fellow-countrymen; and, if you examine impartially his position, his nature, and his probable chances, you will perhaps see that he had some cause for apparent despair.

In three days he was to leave D——. When to return, and with what hopes? As he thought of this and this only, it is no wonder that he paid but little attention to the events which in D—— were marching on apace.

The day following the St. Marc, Monsieur le Maire could not, as he said, go and visit the old bûcheron, but the day after he did so, and his visit had a remarkable result! Monsieur le Maire was an early riser, and the clocks had not yet struck eight when he turned into the narrow path which, through the brushwood and brambles, led to the spot where Prosper Morel had erected his present abode. The dew was still heavy on the ground, and the damp under foot and over head made the place remarkably cheerless, let alone the gloom which was cast around it by its strange occupant.

When Monsieur le Maire reached the spot on which stood the shed called La Chapelle à Prosper, there was no sign of any inhabi-

tant, no trace of the whereabouts of a living man. The Maire went straight up to the open side of the shed, and examined minutely all the ornaments and accessories of the chapel, and when he had done that, he, with the inquisitiveness of a civil functionary which the Curé had not, proceeded to an investigation of the other part of the rude dwelling. It had seemingly neither door nor window, but on raising the clumsy bit of hurdle-fence with which the opening was closed, you looked into a sort of den or hole in which it was clear that the woodcutter slept. In one corner was a heap of straw, hay, heather, and fern, all mixed up together, and covered over with a piece of coarse brown blanket, very much torn. It was more like the lair of a beast than the resting-place of a man, but it was evidently the old man's bed.

The Maire indulged in a protracted examination of the inside of the establishment, but found nothing to satisfy his curiosity. Of the occupant there was no sign. Leaving the apparent bed-chamber of the bûcheron, and closing it up again with the hurdle, the visitor passed to the outside of the shed and proceeded to study the hieroglyphics of the boarding at the back of it. Yes, truly enough, there they were;—the figures and images and signs of which so much had been told! There were the guillotines, and flames, and verses from the Psalms, and, over and over repeated, the words: "Prosper did it," and "God be merciful to the murderer!" And there stood again and again the letters P and M under the guillotine, over the flames; but of no other letter was there any trace; whether the letter R meant Retribution, as the Juge de Paix suggested, or not, was all one; for there was no letter R to be seen anywhere. To this Monsieur le Maire attached very little importance. It only made him form a rather low estimate of the accuracy of the Juge de Paix's lanky, overgrown boy, who in that respect simply shared in the mind of M. le Maire the disfavour attaching to boys in general, who were all in his opinion more or less stupid and inaccurate.

At last the Maire discovered Prosper Morel. But what was he doing?

Turning round the corner behind the part of the shed devoted to the chapel, the visitor came upon what looked at first like a heap of old clothes, but what turned out to be the Breton cowering down with hands and knees upon the ground, and apparently groping for something hidden upon, or under the earth. At sight of the intruder Prosper looked up, and turning round seated himself deliberately with his back to the shed and his two hands clasped across his knees. He neither looked angry nor surprised, but gazed intently at the Maire.

"You lead a solitary life out here," began the dignitary.

"No!" answered the Breton, "my life is peopled. I am never alone."

"Who is with you?" asked the Maire, determined to humour the old man.

"Who is with me?" he echoed. "The past, the past! I'm full of the past."

"Prosper," continued his interlocutor, "I have not come here to do you any harm, but to judge for myself of the strange reports that you encourage by your own conduct. Look at me, Prosper Morel, and try to tell me the real truth. What reason have you for saying the wild things you say? What interest have you in leading the whole town down there to believe that you have committed an awful crime?" While the Maire was speaking, Prosper's countenance underwent no change. All its life was as usual concentrated in the eyes, and these were fixed upon the speaker as though they would absorb his every feature. Slowly he rose, and his huge uncouth figure leaning against the wall, he put forth his arm and fastened his bony fingers upon the Maire's wrist.

"What reason?" he exclaimed; "what interest? What; can't you understand it? My soul! my soul! I want to save that. But that is how you are, you bourgeois, all of you! You go to church, but you don't believe; and you don't care for truth, God's truth, the eternal truth, by which we are saved or damned. You will take the life of an innocent creature, because you think he seems guilty, and you take no trouble to see whether he is so or not, and when real guilt,—the very truth of crime,—is brought before you, you won't recognise it, because it is not discovered by the agents of the law. Oh! Monsieur le Maire, Monsieur le Maire," went on the bûcheron with desperate earnestness, "we have souls; we really have souls, and we can save them."

"But, my good man," objected the other, now seriously inclined to believe in Prosper's insanity, "do you mean then, seriously, to declare that you murdered Martin Prévost?"

"This hand did the deed," replied the woodcutter, holding up his right hand and spreading its five fingers out to their utmost directly in the face of the Maire, who stepped back a pace or two. "Yes!" resumed the Breton, "this hand, but only this hand; not mind or will; only the hand!"

"And you hope for forgiveness by accusing yourself?" suggested his visitor.

"Hope! I am sure of it. I have confessed. I confess every day. Come with me!" and before he could resist it, the Maire found himself dragged before the boarding, on which Prosper pointed out to him his gloomy writings. "There," he said, "and there, and there! I hide nothing, I give all I have to purchase back my soul, and when the Lord has forgiven me, expiation will come. I wait, I wait! De profundis clamavi ad te, Domine!" And he crossed his hands on his breast and looked upwards fervently.

The Maire was now all but fully convinced of Prosper's insanity; and the latter caught at his conviction by some intuitive sense.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, with sudden animation; "that is so like you all. You don't believe what you don't know. Take care, Monsieur le Maire; take care! You don't believe a man has a soul; you don't believe he ought to give his life to save it. You wouldn't save yours with your life, Monsieur le Maire. Saint Thomas! Saint Thomas! they must touch, ere they believe. Well then, look here!"

Seizing hold of the Maire's arm he led him back to the spot where he had himself been discovered cowering down upon the ground. He went down upon both knees, displaced a few loose stones, took up with his nails a square sod of turf, cleared away some mould, and brought to view a small wooden box, the lid of which he opened without taking the box from its resting place. "There," he cried, "what do you see now?—golden Napoleons, and bank-notes, and papers, and a purse! There is all that was taken out of Monsieur's strong box when he was dead. There it lies;—all that you never could find; all that for which you were so certain he was killed, there it lies! Now you believe because now you understand. Oh! you wise, wise men! And you take to yourselves the right to punish and absolve! Help me to save my soul, Monsieur le Maire, help me to save my soul! For now you know I am the murderer of my master."

The Maire was convinced.

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That same day, the 27th of April, Prosper Morel was arrested by the Brigadier de Gendarmerie and his assistants in virtue of a proper warrant, and lodged provisionally in the jail at D——. He offered no resistance. On the contrary, a curious kind of elation seemed to inspire him, and he walked with a firm step between his captors, into the town of D——, a crucifix clasped with both hands upon his breast, and chanting as he went, in a loud voice, the Litanies for the Dead.

OUR PROGRAMME FOR THE LIBERALS.

Amongst the many anecdotes related of Pius IX., it is recorded that on one occasion, when an enthusiastic devotee attempted to console him amidst his troubles by the remark that, after all, the Bark of St. Peter would never founder, the holy father replied, "La barca, no, ma il Barcajolo, si"—The boat was certain to ride out the storm, but the boatmen might well be washed overboard. A somewhat similar sentiment to that expressed in this Papal epigram would represent, not unfairly, the state of feeling with which many thoughtful English Liberals regard the prospects of their party. As to the perpetuity of those principles, which, for want of a better term, we must describe by the much abused name of the principles of progress, we entertain as absolute and unswerving a faith as ever zealot entertained in the indestructibility of the one orthodox creed. As long as human nature remains what it is, there will be a party of progress and a party opposed to change. The struggle, which in the old Persian theology was symbolised by the perpetual warfare between Ormuzd and Arimanes, is always going on in this as in every civilised country. The questions at issue between the contending parties vary from generation to generation, almost from year to year. The goal of one era is the starting-point of the next. The most bigoted Tories of the present day are infinitely more liberal in many practical respects than the Roundheads of two centuries ago. But for all that the men of the Commonwealth were fighting in the same cause with the Reformers of our own day. Future generations may, and will, apply to the men of our time, the test which, as Lord Macaulay stated, must be applied to the men of the Revolution. "The question," to quote the words of the most brilliant of English essayists, "with respect to them, is not where they were, but which way they were going. Were their faces set in the right or the wrong direction? Were they in the front or in the rear of their generation? Did they exert themselves to help onward the great movement of the human race or to stop it?" It is possible, it is even probable, that the verdict of history may convict the Liberals of our own day, as our judgment convicts those of a preceding era of many errors of judgment, of much narrowness of vision, of holding tenets inconsistent with the fundamental principles of Liberalism; but still this verdict will, we doubt not, decide that there were amongst us men whose faces were set in the right direction, who were in the front, not in the rear,

of their generation, who did exert themselves to help forward the great movement of the human race.

But perfect and absolute confidence in the indestructibility of Liberalism is not inconsistent with an admission that the schools, or parties, or organisations, which from time to time carry on the work of Liberalism are by no means indestructible. Nor is any want of loyalty involved in the confession, that the liberal party is now passing through a very critical phase of its existence. Without entering on any recondite historical disquisition, we may say roughly, that the Liberals, as a party, date from the first Reform Bill. They succeeded to the inheritance of the old Whigs, who in their time did good yeoman's service to the State. There are individual Whigs left now, but the Whigs as a party are dead and gone. No young politician starting in public life, no candidate addressing himself to any independent constituency, would think of describing himself as a Whig. The substitution of the term Liberal for Whig, means a good deal more than a mere change of names. With the name of Whig, there has vanished also that peculiar coalition between democratic principles and aristocratic prejudices which constituted the essence of Whiggism. In the same way, whenever it comes to pass that Liberal, as a party name, is supplanted by that of Radical, the alteration will indicate a corresponding change in the character of the party to whom the name is applied. The Liberals, as our generation has known them, have represented the cause of progress, but they have represented also the interests, the convictions, and to some extent the prejudices of the great English middle class. It is not difficult to imagine a party with higher aims, greater earnestness, and deeper convictions, than that which still bears the name of Liberal. We may reasonably hope that in the course of years, England may be governed by such a party as the one which our imagination pictures. But common sense tells us that there is not, and that for a long time there cannot be, any such party in existence; while common fairness bids us acknowledge that with all its failings, the liberal party of the present day forms the nearest approach to a true party of progress that the country has yet known.

What mathematicians term solutions of continuity are rare in our political annals; and even assuming that we thought the result desirable, we should be unwise to reckon on any sudden transformation of the liberal party as it at present exists. We can understand well enough that to a class of minds wedded to abstract principles, impatient of delay, eager for immediate action, the sort of Liberalism which characterises the great mass of our party may seem a matter of small account. We think ourselves that this view is founded on a miscalculation. The question that practical men ought to ask themselves is this, What combination is most likely to promote the furtherance of liberal measures? To this question our reply would be, without hesitation,

the maintenance of the liberal party. Unless some common line of action can be agreed upon which will unite in its support the whole, or, at any rate, the great majority, of the members who now sit on the left-hand of the Speaker, it is obvious that the party will break up into sections. We should have indeed a body of advanced Reformers, men holding very definite opinions, men of great earnestness and deep convictions, and we may add also, men of somewhat narrow prejudices, whose destructive energies were developed out of proportion to their constructive ones. But it is certain that for the present, probably for many years to come, this party must remain in a hopeless minority. Condemned to the inaction of prolonged exclusion from power, their prejudices would become more confirmed, their zeal more intolerant, and the division between them and the moderate Liberals more irreconcilable. The result would be that a great portion of the party would give a tacit, if not an avowed, support to the Tories; and we should have an era of conservative rule of more or less prolonged duration. Now, it is quite conceivable that a state of things might come to pass in which such a disruption of the party, such an open separation between the advanced and the moderate Liberals, would be of real advantage to the cause of progress. If there were no important measures which could be carried by the Liberals of our day, if the one condition on which corporate existence were possible was that the earnest Reformers should consent to do nothing in order no to lose the support of their weaker brethren, we should say that the sooner a liberal majority was exchanged for a radical minority the better for the interests of true Liberalism. But we can see no reason to believe that this is so. On the contrary, we see a great deal of work before us which the liberal party may and can perform, but which assuredly will not be performed if the administration of affairs is handed over permanently to the Conservatives.

Under these circumstances, men who, like ourselves, prefer the substance to the shadow, an immediate certain good to a problematical and contingent gain, must view with extreme reluctance the prospect of any dissolution of the liberal party. There is still, in our judgment, much work for it to do, work that it can do better than any other organisation which can take its place; and till that work be accomplished the time has not come for its disrupture. Yet it would be idle to pretend that there existed no danger of its breaking to pieces. On the contrary, we hold the danger which threatens its existence to be a very grave one, and to be averted only by decisive action. We have not the space to inquire now into the various causes which gradually debilitated the great party that carried Roman Catholic emancipation, that passed the Reform Bill, that repealed the Corn Laws. This much, however, we may fairly say, that the Palmerstonian régime represented the lowest period in the Liberal annals. The grand ministerial majority returned to Parliament at the last

election, was composed of men whose chief bond of union consisted in the fact that they all more or less willingly accepted the necessity of supporting Lord Palmerston as Premier. When the great statesman died,—for great as a statesman we hold Lord Palmerston to have been, whatever opinions may be held on his character as a Reformer or a Liberal,—the majority were, not only as sheep without a shepherd, but as sheep without the ovine instinct which causes them to herd in flocks together. It is conceivable that Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone might have kept the party together if they had pursued the Palmerstonian policy of masterly inaction; but their attempts to carry the principles of the party into practice, in however modified a degree, broke to pieces an organisation which had already lost its true bond of cohesion. The session of 1866 showed clearly that the Liberals, great as their numerical strength was, did not possess a working majority in Parliament for any practical purpose, and that the task of reform, if it was to be done at all, must be done by a Conservative Government.

We are not going to re-open once more the weary controversy as to the history of the late Reform Bill, the intentions of its authors, or the morality of the tactics by which it was passed. We only allude to the subject in order to point out how the circumstances under which household suffrage became the law of the land must necessarily influence the future policy of the Liberals. The bill,—let us speak the honest truth,—was not carried in obedience to any irresistible expression of popular opinion. The "Vox Populi" was not obeyed, for the simple reason that it was never raised. The Hyde Park riots and Pall Mall processions were made much of as excuses for reform, but no sensible person regards them as the causes of reform. In fact, the character and progress of the bill would not have been materially affected in any way if the League had never seen the light of day. Nor, again, can we fairly say that reform was due to the deep conviction of Parliament. Roman Catholic emancipation was never popular with the masses; but it was carried against the Crown and the Tories by the resolution of the Liberals of the time. No similar assertion can honestly be made with respect to the late Reform Bill. It was accepted with about equal reluctance by both sides of the House, as a disagreeable necessity; and if vote by ballot had existed in Parliament, and had been surrounded with that inviolable secrecy which the admirers of the system imagine can be attached to its working, we cannot doubt but, time after time, Mr. Disraeli's household suffrage measure would have been thrown out by overwhelming majorities. We make this confession with no view of denying the need for reform. On the contrary, we hold that it was a matter of urgent national necessity. The dead-lock of parties may have been the immediate cause of the bill passing, but that fatal dead-lock was due to the fact that the electoral body had ceased to represent the nation.

Looking on the whole question with as much impartiality as we can command, it seems to us that, while the Tories cannot justly claim any great credit for passing a measure which they disliked at heart, the Liberals, as a party, can as little demand gratitude for the enactment of a bill to which at best they gave a half-hearted support. In a certain sense, no doubt, everybody who at any time advocated an extensive enlargement of the franchise, contributed to the final triumph of the principle of household suffrage. But no one party in the State can fairly claim the sole, or even the chief, parentage of the measure. We record this fact with regret. It would, in our judgment, have been better for the Liberals, better for the country at large, had reform been enacted through their unassisted efforts. For many years past reform has been the work set before the liberal party; and had they not persistently declined to grapple with their task, their position at the present day would be far more commanding than it is. There is no mistake, however, in politics at once more common and more fatal than that of assuming, because we wish things had been otherwise, that therefore they were otherwise. We shall commit this error, unless we acknowledge, not only to others, but to ourselves, that the Reform Bill of 1867 was in no real sense the work of the liberal party.

We dwell on this fact, from a double motive. During the recess there has been a tendency on the part of liberal spokesmen to fight the old battle over again with unnecessary zeal. It is natural enough that while the Tory leaders arrogate to themselves a credit which is not justly due, their opponents should endeavour to prove that their own claims on the public gratitude are at least equally well founded. But the word natural is not synonymous with the word politic; and we deem this perpetual recurrence to an extinct controversy to be unwise. Even if we do not accept Talleyrand's dictum, that there is one person who knows everything, and that is, all the world, we must own that there is one person who can never be deceived, and that is, all the world. Now, all the world knows that the late Reform Bill was in no sense the outcome of honest hearty work on the part of the Liberals; and therefore no amount of special pleading or historical disquisition will create an impression that it was so. The respective merits or demerits of Tories and Liberals, Radicals, Adullamites, Tea-room men, and others, belong to the domain of history; and no practical good will accrue to any one from an attempt to prove that things would have been different if something had happened which did not happen, or that our public men intended to do something quite different from what they actually did do. The great public cares much more about the coming future than the immediate past, and is more anxious to know what the Liberals intend to do this session than what they think they ought to have done in the one that is now numbered with the dead. Again,—and this is a

point to which we attach much greater importance,—it is essential to understand the true character of our recent reform legislation, if we are to make any just estimate of what should be the future programme of the Liberals. We have seen with regret a disposition in several of the recent manifestoes of the liberal leaders, to preach a new reform crusade. Now, we admit fully that there is much that must be done to make the new measure work in practice. The ratepaying clauses must be done away with; the vicious principle of the representation of minorities must be either expelled from our electoral system, or reduced to limits which guarantee its practical innocuousness; and the question of borough boundaries must be settled in accordance with some intelligible theory. All these, however, are matters of detail, of administrative, rather than political, reform. When all this is done, we admit further that the representation of the country will still fall very far short of being placed on a satisfactory and permanent basis. The great masses of the rural labouring population will still be practically unrepresented; the flagrant electoral anomalies by which the vote of Thetford neutralises that of Manchester, will remain in full force; Parliament will still continue to represent the landed interests of the country in an excessive proportion. Yet, allowing all this, as we do most fully, we believe that wise and sincere Liberals will do well to accept the electoral situation as it is, without seeking for the moment to modify it materially.

Vote by ballot, redistribution of seats, extension of household suffrage to the counties; such we understand to be the programme of some of the advanced Liberals for the coming session. Now, even leaving the ballot out of consideration for the moment, and assuming that this programme was one with which, in other respects, all true Liberals were prepared to coincide in the abstract, we should still dispute the advisability of putting it forward as the platform of the party. After all, in politics, the first question about any reform must be, is it feasible; is there any chance of carrying it? Speculative reforms are questions for the essayist and the journalist, not for the politician,—for the pioneers, not for the rank and file, of the army of progress. Now, is there any reasonable prospect that the reforms in question can be carried through Parliament, either this session or for many sessions to come? Our own opinion is that there is not. It would be different if the Liberals were to approach the task flushed with recent victory, strong in the recollection of fresh triumphs, supported by the force of deep popular enthusiasm. Notoriously, they enter on the contest with none of these advantages. On the contrary, the dead weight of public opinion will be exerted against these "Reformers of the day after the fight." If household suffrage had been carried in obedience to an irresistible popular demand, the case would have been different. As it is, the concessions made at Mr. Disraeli's instance, were actually in advance of what public opinion demanded.

We are far from deeming that the undoubted apathy which prevailed throughout the public mind during the course of the reform agitation, is matter for congratulation. We trust that one good result of household suffrage will be to restore the old interest which our working classes took at former periods in political questions. We should be glad to see manifestations of public feeling of a very different character from the Bogus demonstrations of the League. But we cannot disguise the truth that popular feeling would have been satisfied for the time by a measure falling far short of household suffrage. Under these circumstances, any immediate agitation for much more wholesale reforms is not likely to meet with any strong popular support. The verdict of the unknown public, of that great fluctuating body which has no very defined political opinions, which is neither steadily liberal nor persistently conservative, will assuredly be, that it is better to wait awhile. If ever there was a country which, both for good or bad, "liked to see its way," it is this England of ours. By the bill of last session, an immense change has been introduced into our Constitution; the proportions of the different elements out of which the electoral body is composed, have been materially altered; the national instinct, therefore, is in favour of making no other great change in our institutions till we see how this latest one works in practice. There is no superfluous force left from the late reform agitation which demands some immediate vent for its energies. On the contrary, the motive power was exhausted before the work was fully done; and time must elapse before fresh force can be generated. We are by no means clear that it might not be a more statesmanlike, or at least more philosophical proceeding to finish the reform of our representative system completely before we lay the work aside; but under free institutions such as we enjoy, all reforms must be carried on piecemeal; and after the great step we have made, the time has not come for attempting to take another with any chance of success In agitating, therefore, for a wide redistribution of electoral power, r for a wholesale enfranchisement of the agricultural population, the Liberals will, we believe, be engaged in an unprofitable labour. Sooner or later these reforms must be carried; but the period of their enactment will, as things indicate at present, be later and not sooner.

Moreover, we would observe, in passing, that the connection of two reforms, like redistribution and extension of the County suffrage, about which all Liberals are substantially agreed in principle, with a question like that of the ballot, on which the greatest diversity of opinion exists, appears to us singularly ill-judged and unfortunate. A great deal of nonsense has been talked, both in favour of and against vote by ballot; but the question at issue between the supporters and the opponents of the system is in itself a very simple one. No Liberal denies that intimidation and corruption are evils. Every Liberal admits that in itself open voting is preferable to secret

voting. In order, therefore, to establish a case for the ballot, it has to be shown, in the first place, that the system would prove effective as a means of preventing the voter from being influenced by corrupt considerations; and in the second place, that the advantage so gained would not be purchased by a more than commensurate loss of public honesty and open dealing. We ourselves, in common with a very large section, if not a majority of the liberal party, distrust the efficacy of the ballot as a practical system, and deem that intimidation and bribery may be far more easily suppressed by the enlargement of our constituencies than by any mechanical alteration in the manner in which votes are recorded. We are open to conviction on the point; and it is possible some day or other we may feel it incumbent on us to accept vote by ballot as a necessary evil. For the present, however, we can see no necessity for so doing; and therefore we must decidedly object to making the ballot one of the points of the Liberal charter. It is very doubtful whether we can carry redistribution or County household suffrage singly. It is certain we cannot hope to carry either if we insist on the ballot being an inalienable part of any scheme for further reform.

As we have said, however, we believe the question of immediate electoral reforms had better be left to sleep for a time. The course of events has brought about a great change of a democratic character. How that change has been achieved it is not necessary to inquire; the important fact is, that the change exists. Owing to a variety of causes, the full significance of the change has hardly yet been appreciated. The Tories, naturally enough, have all along been anxious to make out that, under the new régime, things would remain much as they were; while the Liberals were equally desirous to show that the concessions granted to the popular cause were rather nominal than real. And we own it seems to us an open question what may be the immediate party result of the enfranchisement of the small householder class. We shall have to deal in future with large masses of electors who are not influenced by the party cries which divided the old constituencies, who believe only too generally that Whig and Tory are very much alike, after all. But even supposing that the enfranchised classes should return candidates pledged to the support of a Conservative government, we should still have no doubt as to the democratic tendency of the Reform Bill. It has increased the power of numbers; it has thereby decreased the power of the governing classes. Under these conditions the Liberals have a great field open to them, if they only know how to play their cards. Their first object should be to convince the new electors that they, in vulgar parlance, mean business. It was by doing nothing, by shirking the work set before them, by wasting their energies on measures which there was no practical prospect of passing, that the Liberals gradually lost the confidence of the old constituencies. It must be by the con-

verse of this process that they can hope to gain the confidence of the remodelled electoral body. At one time it seemed probable that the Government would endeavour to outbid the Opposition in active legislation. Possibly this might have been the case had Mr. Disraeli been allowed full liberty of action. As it is, the "vis inertiæ" of the Conservative party has prevailed; and it seems tolerably certain that the Tories will not endeavour to grapple seriously with any of the great questions which press so urgently for a solution. Their inaction ought to be the signal for our activity. Let us try and sketch out what programme of things to be done, of work to be compassed, the liberal party may fairly lay before itself.

First and foremost, to our minds, there stands the great question of national education. For Liberals this question has a special and personal importance beyond that which attaches to it intrinsically. Though we may deprecate any immediate and premature attempt to extend the suffrage in the rural constituencies, we cannot doubt that in the course of a few years household suffrage must become the law of the land in town and country alike. Indeed, we are hardly trespassing on the domain of prophecy when we assume that, in another generation or two at the most, we in England shall be under the rule of universal manhood suffrage. The tendency of the age is towards government by numerical majorities; and we have already entered on a course from which there is no retrogression. This being so, the education of the masses becomes a matter of imperial interest. Even the most ardent believer in the practical working of democratic government can hardly look without uneasiness to the prospect of supreme political power being entrusted to a population so ignorant, so illiterate, and so unintelligent, as that which peoples the English agricultural shires, and which forms the lower stratum of the urban working class. As far as can be foreseen, we may look forward to a considerable interval of repose before we are called upon to extend the electoral franchise much further than it has been extended by the recent Reform Bill. The children of the present generation of working men will have grown up to manhood before the next great step has to be taken. Now, the first and chief duty of the liberal party should be to utilise this breathing time. It is perfectly conceivable that within the next two or three years we might establish such a system of national education as would extirpate ignorance from our soil. There is no practical reason why, in twenty years time, a grown-up man under forty unable to read and write should not be as rare a spectacle in England as he is in North America, or Prussia, or Scotland. But this great boon,—the greatest boon, we think, that could be granted to England,—can only be achieved by vigorous and united and persistent exertions on the part of the liberal party. Individual Conservatives may be, and are, alive to the necessity for national education; but the ruling instinct of the Tory nature is opposed to

the enlightenment of the masses. Then, too, by an unfortunate combination of circumstances, the clergy and the leaders of the religious world,—the very people, in fact, who have done most of their own accord to promote education,—attach such value to dogmatic theological tuition, that they are opposed to any wholesale system of State education, which must necessarily be secular in its character. And last, but not least, the whole bias of our English nature is hostile to the State interference and to the administrative organisation which are absolutely requisite essentials of any scheme of general education. It is therefore only too probable that the agitation now set on foot, with the view,—to adopt Mr. Lowe's ill-natured, but not altogether baseless sarcasm,—of teaching our future masters to know their letters, may end in failure from the joint opposition of the classes who either dislike education altogether, or are opposed to secular education on principle, or will hear of nothing but the voluntary system. It lies within the power of the Liberals to defeat this coalition of hostile forces; but the victory can only be won by union. We should exceed the limits of our space and subject here if we attempted to define the exact character of the system of education which the Liberals ought to support. The one main object, we may state, of all such systems should be to give every English child the power of reading and writing fluently. So long as this object is achieved, it seems to us that the details of the process are of comparatively little importance. Let any project be prepared by the liberal leaders which offers a reasonable prospect of effecting this great end, and we should deem it the duty of the party to sink all minor differences, and support it with the same energy as that which carried the repeal of the Corn Laws. What Abraham Lincoln said, towards the close of his life, about the abolition of slavery, the liberal party ought to say to itself about the enactment of a system of national education—"It is their duty to see this matter through." If they cannot unite to do this, if they are unwilling to make the necessary sacrifices, or the requisite exertions, it is a sure sign that, as a party, they have lived out their time, and must give place to other workers. To put down ignorance is the present task which events have entrusted to the Liberals of England. By their fulfilment or non-fulfilment of this mission, their record will be judged hereafter.

Next in importance to the question of education comes that of Ireland. Upon this point, also, it is all-essential that the Liberals should determine on united action. In this article, we would observe, we are not putting forward our own views of what ought to be the policy of the liberal party in the abstract; our object is to indicate, if possible, the work which it lies practically within their power to do. Proceeding on this principle, we say without hesitation that, whether it be desirable or not to deal with the land question in Ireland, or with the relations between the sister kingdom and Great Britain, it is not ad-

visable that any specific legislation on these questions should form part of the liberal programme. It is possible that in the course of time certain clear and definite views on these important issues may be accepted as articles of the liberal creed. At present this is so far from being the case, that any attempt to deal with these questions would simply result in the disruption of the party. Is then nothing to be done for Ireland? Such, most assuredly, is not our opinion. There is one measure which can be, and ought to be, carried without delay; one wrong which can be, and ought to be, redressed at once. We allude, of course, to the Established Church in Ireland. Now this is a matter on which the liberal party should in our judgment take immediate action. It may be urged with some plausibility, that the existence of the Protestant Establishment across St. George's Channel, however gross an abuse and anomaly it may be in theory, has never been brought prominently forward as one of the wrongs of Ireland, and that the disendowment of the Episcopal Church would not do much towards allaying the disaffection of which Fenianism is the outcome. In reply to this objection, we would urge that any measures we take about Ireland must necessarily be tentative. We disbelieve "in toto" in the existence of any political panacea or nostrum which would at once restore loyalty, and prosperity, and contentment, to our Celtic fellow-countrymen. The real ills of which Ireland has to complain arise from causes which have been in operation for many centuries; and years, possibly generations, must elapse, before any possible or impossible legislation can undo the work of ages. In dealing with Ireland, we must proceed step by step; and it is obvious that the first step must be the abolition of a State Church, whose creed is that of the small minority of the nation. Nor are we by any means certain that the result of its abolition will be so slight as is commonly supposed. After all, its existence is the symbol of the supremacy of the Orange minority over the Catholic majority; and symbols are of more practical importance to this world than utilitarian philosophy is disposed to acknowledge. Even the most intelligent and loyal of Irish Roman Catholics have a conviction that they are not as well off as their Protestant fellow-subjects, by reason of their religious belief; and it is most desirable to remove any shadow of ground for the existence of such a conviction. When once the State Church is abolished, the endowments of Trinity College, Dublin, thrown open to all Irishmen irrespective of their religious creed, and every office of State made accessible to Catholics, the last of the legislative grievances of which Ireland can complain will be exhausted.

Now, with respect to the injustice of upholding the Irish Church, all Liberals are agreed. Indeed, the idea of a Church supported out of national grants, and designed to teach a creed which is opposed to that of the vast majority of the nation, is inconsistent with, and antagonistic to, the very principles of Liberalism. No Liberal can

even pretend to defend the maintenance of the Anglican Establishment in Ireland. The utmost he can urge in its behalf is that it does not work in practice as badly as might be supposed in theory. Here, then, is a clear, definite, distinct, simple object, which Liberals of all shades may fairly unite in achieving. No sane person expects that the Conservative party will of its own free-will abolish the Establishment, and thereby alienate from itself the sympathies of the Orange faction. The Conservative party will certainly not do so unless outside pressure be applied. Mr. Disraeli has probably as little sympathy as any member of the House of Commons with the institution in question. But then he is the last man in the world to put his head into a hornets' nest without urgent necessity. On the other hand, the position of the Irish Church is so palpably untenable and indefensible, that if strong pressure be applied, if the odium of taking the initiative be removed from their own shoulders, a Tory administration is not likely to stake its existence on the defence of the Church in Ireland. The responsibility, therefore, of deciding whether this long-standing abuse shall or shall not continue, rests practically with the Liberals themselves. If they do nothing, the Conservatives will let the question stand over. If they put their shoulders to the wheel, the battle is won before the fight commences. As with regard to education, so with regard to the Irish Church, there is work to be done which ought to be done, and which only the Liberals can do. They are placed upon their trial; and it is for them to show that they are in favour of reform in fact as well as in name.

It would be easy to write out a long list of reforms not less intrinsically important than those we have already specified. Our criminal code, our national expenditure, the game laws, the administration of the poor laws, the question of entails, church rates, army and navy reform, municipal government, penal servitude, and a host of similar topics, press for early treatment. On all these points thoughtful Liberals must form opinions of their own. The time is probably not far distant when the party, as a party, must adopt some definite standard in dealing with each of them. But at present we may say that they are hardly ripe for collective action. It is possible that the views put forward by some advanced thinkers, with reference to these subjects, may ultimately commend themselves to the rank and file of the party; but that time is not yet; and we view with distrust any attempt to carry out crude theories, however plausible in themselves. Of politics, even more than of other things, the saying holds good that sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. How far the whole system of government by party is abstractedly defensible is a question which lies entirely beyond our present range. We have to deal with existing facts, not with theories; and for the time, government by party is the only system possible for England. But the very essence of such

a system requires that the members of the organisation should to a great extent subordinate their own views to those of the majority; and therefore we hold that politicians who may entertain very decided opinions as to many of the questions we have alluded to, will act honestly, as well as prudently, in making no attempt to carry their opinions into practice till they have done the work which it lies within their power to do by the help of their colleagues.

As far as we can guess, foreign questions are not likely in future to engross public attention to the same extent as they have done in preceding sessions. In itself this is not to be regretted. It is, to say the least, significative that the years during which the liberal party in England were most inactive, most neglectful of their home mission, were also those in which they interested themselves most entirely in foreign affairs, and identified themselves most closely with the futures of oppressed nationalities. We are very far from wishing to endorse the sneer with which Mr. Disraeli denounced the "jargon of cosmopolitan sympathies." The cause of progress is to a great extent identical, no matter in what portion of the world the perpetual contest between freedom and oppression, between ignorance and enlightenment, between good and evil, may be waged for the time being; and English Liberalism would be very near its end if the time should ever come when the struggles of other nations to obtain popular institutions should excite no sympathy in England. Moreover we may add, that, as a rule, the politicians who have taken the keenest interests in the issues fought out abroad, are also those who have laboured most earnestly to promote the success of liberal principles at home. But still during late years an exaggerated importance was undoubtedly attached to what it was the fashion to call the moral influence of English public opinion. Non-intervention having been adopted, as we believe wisely, as the basis of our foreign policy, we should do well to accept its consequences frankly. France and Italy, Germany, Poland, and Denmark, must practically work out their own destinies; and in the solution of the various problems with which continental nations have to deal, the public opinion of this country, as expressed in Parliament, or by the despatches of our Foreign Office, is only one, and by no means a very important ingredient. That the fate of our governments should have been influenced, as they have been within the last few years, by the opinions their members were supposed to hold concerning foreign questions, on which the nation had no intention whatever of taking positive action, is a striking illustration of the unreality which characterised the politics of the Palmerstonian era. To the large class of Liberals who were enthusiastic about Italy, and indifferent to all considerations of home reforms, we should address the old Scriptural reproof, "This oughtest thou to have done, and not to have left the other undone."

There is, however, one foreign question of a very practical and by no means sentimental character, on which we hold that the Liberals, as a party, should take decided ground. We allude to the relations between America and England. We do not say that a resolution to make compensation for the Alabama, or to alter our naturalisation laws, or to make any other direct and specific concession to the demands of the Government or people of the United States, should form part of the liberal programme. These questions involve a variety of considerations, many of which, under our system of government, must necessarily be left to the decision of the Administration. The period may arrive, probably at no very distant date, when the issues which divide the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon community may be brought to a point at which the country may be called on to decide what course duty, and honour, and interest alike call upon us to adopt. That time has not come; and, pending its arrival, the liberal party cannot pledge itself to any specific course of action with reference to an undefined issue. But the Liberals can, and ought in our opinion, to proclaim that peace and amity with America, at all cost save that of the national honour or independence, is a fundamental tenet of their political creed. The differences which threaten the continuance of friendly relations between ourselves and America arise from considerations of feeling, far more than from any direct collision of interests. Now nothing could tend so much to a removal of the ill-feeling which, rightly or wrongly, has ensued from our conduct during the late war as a conviction among Americans that the great liberal party of this country were sincerely and honestly desirous to secure the friendship of the American nation.

To leave aside all higher motives, the instinct of self-preservation ought to teach our English Liberals, that between them and America there exists a solidarity of interests. Without wishing to revive an embittered controversy, we may say, as a matter of fact, that the disruption of the liberal organisation was due in no small degree to the extent to which a large section of the party was false to its principles during the struggle between the Slave Power and the Free States; and no acute penetration is needed to see that, if events should unhappily bring about a collision between England and America, the one certain result of the struggle will be to give a new lease of power to the Tories, and to break up the liberal party. Whether we like the admission or not, it is our cause which is at stake across the Atlantic. The name of democracy may be distasteful to our ears, but the principles of free labour, of equality before the law, of self-government, of popular education, of civil and religious freedom,—the principles for which our predecessors have contended, and for which we contend still,—are all bound up in the success or failure of popular institutions in the great community which we have founded beyond the seas. The famous "Tua res agitur" may be

said of the interests which connect the Liberals of England with the cause of freedom in America.

Thus our programme for the Liberals has, at least, the merit of simplicity. We doubt whether much work can be done during the present session. A moribund Parliament which has already outlived the causes that called it into being is not likely to initiate any great enterprise. Moreover, the next few months must inevitably be taken up with what may be termed the revision of the appendixes to the Reform Bill, including the arrangements which are necessary for the Scotch and Irish constituencies. As we have said, we think the Liberals will commit a blunder if they enter at once on a crusade for a further extension of the franchise, but they will have enough to do in seeing that the measure is finished and perfected in conformity with the great principles on which it is based; that no attempt be made to diminish the democratic character of the measure by artificial restrictions; that the new Paliament which must assemble next year shall truly represent the electoral body, to whom its composition is now supposed to be entrusted.

But though the actual legislation of Parliament must probably be confined to closing up old accounts, we hold that no time should be lost before the Liberals take ground for the approaching elections. Their programme, as we opine, should consist of three articles; Establishment of a national system of education; Abolition of the Established Church in Ireland; and the maintenance of friendly relations with the United States. Of course it would be very easy to fill up this programme with all kind of reforms to be achieved, if ever the Liberals get back into power. We have had, however, too much of these prospectuses, which promise more than can possibly be performed. At the commencement of the Opera season, it is the custom of rival managers to issue programmes reciting long lists of operas, all of which are to be brought out during the spring months. Anybody who has the slightest acquaintance with operatic matters must be aware that if the season were prolonged to twice its usual length, there would still not be time to redeem all the pledges of the managerial prospectus. Yet the practice continues, because it is supposed the public are somehow tickled with the mere recital of the names of operas. A similar delusion appears to be often entertained by the framers of Royal Speeches and political manifestoes. But we think for once the practice might be departed from with advantage. To carry through a scheme of national education, and to establish religious equality in Ireland, will take all the energies of the liberal party; and we shall have more faith in their fulfilment of their programme, if they reduce it within limits which render its execution at least theoretically possible. And just because we wish that the programme of the party should be one capable of realisation, we wish also that it should be put forward in such a manner

as to leave no doubt of the sincerity of its authors. At the risk of repeating ourselves, we wish to impress upon the leaders of the party, that their first and foremost duty must be to show the world that they really mean work. We have scarcely alluded in our remarks to the probability that before long the Liberals may be once more in possession of office. We have not dwelt on this fact, because we hold that the formation and enunciation of a definite and distinct programme are necessary preliminaries to the return of the party to power. Any event which should replace them in office before they had settled on their policy, would be in our opinion a positive misfortune.

If politics were a mere game, there would be something to be said for a waiting policy. It may be a defect in tactics to show your hand before it is absolutely necessary to do so. But politics are in our judgment something more than a contention as to which set of men shall sit upon the Treasury benches. We hope to see the Liberals re-installed in office; but we hope so because we believe that they can thus better carry out the work set before them; and we are convinced that work can never be accomplished unless they can command the support of the public. In order to secure this support they must convince the constituencies that they are in earnest, that they aspire to power, not for the emoluments or dignity of office, but because they are anxious to do honest work honestly. Nothing has been more fatal to the liberal party than the conviction, which of late years has taken great hold of the popular mind, that Liberals and Tories act in the same way whenever they are once in power. It is possible that the enunciation of a clear and distinct programme, such as that which we have indicated, may detach from the Liberals a certain amount of half-hearted support, given to them on the tacit understanding that they are not to carry out their principles into execution. But we are convinced that any loss of this kind will be more than counterbalanced by the sympathy which a policy of action will call forth throughout the country. If we are to have a dynasty of "rois fainéants," the public will certainly look for its sovereigns amidst the Conservatives, not amidst the Liberals; amidst the party whose creed consists in an aversion to change, not amidst those whose motto is and must be, Forwards.

ABOUT HUNTING.

II.

In the observations which we made three or four months since about hunting, we did not get beyond a simple explanation of the nationality of the sport and a statement of the cost of following it. We now propose to describe, if it may be within our power to do so, what it is that the hunting man enjoys, and how that enjoyment may be best secured. And we will endeavour to give to the tyro in hunting a few ideas as to what he should do, how he should conduct himself, and in what way he should endeavour to make himself happy in the hunting-field. We will add to this some few observations as to the difficulties which are ordinarily encountered in the management of a country, as we are taught by experience to think that those difficulties are very much underrated by many gentlemen who, when they are at a meet, think it to be all in the course of nature that a country well provided with foxes and fit to be ridden over should be open to them and to their horses.

That there is much to be enjoyed in hunting can hardly be doubted by any of our readers. Who knows the man or woman who has hunted and who does not wish to continue it?—or any young man who does not hunt, and does not wish that he did? And yet it would be difficult enough, even for the sportsman who has been at it for half a century, who has thought of it, dreamed of it, and talked of it, who has longed for it in summer, and steadily practised in it in winter, —it would be difficult enough even for such a one to realise to himself what it is that he enjoys. In most of the amusements to which men are prone, there is a certain standard of success by which superiority in achievement can be measured;—in so many head of game brought down by him who shoots; in so many fish, or so many pounds of fish, captured by the man who fishes; in the score at billiards or at cricket; in the points won at whist; and above all, in the events on the turf. In each of these a man can reckon up his doings, can count his triumphs, and can tell himself, by the result of his calculations, whether to him the game is worth the candle. There can be no such reckoning up in hunting. The old-fashioned taking of the brush, which was once regarded as the winning of the Derby of the day, is altogether exploded. The huntsman takes the brush, and when a gentleman brings it home in his pocket, it is because he has, with the Master's permission, obtained it, not without a consideration, from that popular functionary.

It will be known of any man who is seen frequently with the same pack, whether he rides well or ill to hounds,—and no doubt the public voice will give a pre-eminence to this man or to that of which the hero will be fully aware. But there is no scoring of runs in hunting, no counting up of achievements;—and it is not the foremost rider who is the best sportsman, except on those rare occasions on which to ride foremost requires endurance of man and beast, as well as skill, patience, courage, and good fortune. It unfortunately happens that he who rides foremost in most runs is generally where he ought not to be. It is hardly too much to say that the Master of hounds is usually anathematising in spirit the foremost rider, and that he not unfrequently feels himself called upon to translate his spirit into words. In fact, the customary foremost rider, the man who flashes on the moment the hounds re-settle to their scent, is a pest. Though there be triumphs in hunting, those triumphs can hardly be weighed and measured, and should ever be treasured deep in the silent bosom,—without a word, without a sign, on the part of him who has earned them, to show that he knows that they are his. The successful cricketer may boast of his score. The fisherman may say how many pounds he has caught. But the hunting man should never talk of his own prowess. He may ride as jealous as he pleases; but his speech of himself should be yea, yea, and nay, nay. It is not in recounted triumphs that the pleasure of hunting consists.

But before we attempt to say what this pleasure is, we will venture to express an opinion as to what it is not. And this we will do, because we think that there is still abroad among some folk,—mothers whose sons may perhaps come to hunt, and fathers who have marriageable daughters,—an erroneous idea that hunting is fast, in the slang sense of the word, and that it co-exists naturally with drinking, swearing, gambling, bad society, naughty women, and roaring lions. Among this class of persons, it would naturally be supposed that the man who hunted on Saturday and Monday would certainly not be seen in church on the Sunday. This, we venture to assert, is a mistake in the minds of those who, from the circumstances of their life, know nothing of the hunting-field; and it has been in a great measure produced by the false and flashy descriptions given of hunting by those who have taken upon themselves to portray our country sports. We took up the other day a volume of a modern sporting magazine, and found, bound up with it as a frontispiece, a picture of sundry men in top-boots, sitting or lying round a dinner-table,—and all of them apparently drunk. This picture of a drunken revel was intended to be characteristic of a hunting man's delights. The books, too, that we have had about hunting have too frequently described to us a set of loud ignorant men, who are always holloaing "Yoicks," and who are generally exercising the keenest of their intellects in cheating each other out of a ten-pound note in some

matter of horseflesh. We remonstrate most loudly against this representation of the hunting-field, and declare that we know no place of common resort for amusement, in which a father may go in company with his son, with a fuller assurance that there will be nothing which he and his son may not see and hear and do together. There is a strong feeling against a clergyman who hunts, which we think is grounded on the same mistaken idea. That neither a clergyman should hunt, nor any other man who cannot do so without appropriating time or money which should be given to other things, is clear enough. But, putting that aside, we cannot see how any amusement can be more congenial to, or better adapted for, a gentleman, the nature of whose occupation requires that he shall live in a rural district. There are those who think that a clergyman should never amuse himself in any way, and they are of course only consistent in debarring a vicar from hunting. They would debar him also from reading a novel, or from playing croquet. Our experience, having taught us to believe that clergymen require distraction as much as other men, has induced us also to think that no recreation can be better suited to them than that of the hunting-field. The difficulty consists in this,—that till the prejudice has been conquered, the prejudice itself does the injury which the hunting will not do. The same remarks, mutatis mutandis, apply to the hunting of ladies. The company both of the clergyman and of the lady improves the hunting-field, and we cannot perceive that either ladies or clergymen are injured by what they find there. Our present object, however, is to protest that the roaring-lion element of the hunting-field does not ordinarily belong to it. It did so once, no doubt. But the roaring-lion elements of society were more common then than they are now in many phases of life. They who commence hunting in anticipation of the joys to be found in the roaring-lion elements will find that they are mistaken.

The young man who proposes to himself to take to hunting as one of the amusements of his life, should be on his guard not to expect too much from it. He will get air and exercise, and a daily modicum of excitement. He will find society, and will generally be able to choose for himself good society, if he prefer it. He will see the country in many of its most charming aspects, and will gradually, but unconsciously, discover the secrets and the manners of rural life in England. He will learn how farmers look, and what they do, and will become acquainted with the speech, and gait, and customs of the men. For, as it should always be remembered, the best half of hunting is in the social intercourse which it gives. Though the young sportsman be a liver in cities, he will find that he is a liver also in the country,—that that great page of life is opened to him, and that he will come to a knowledge of rural things and men, which he could learn in no other fashion. But he will not ordinarily be riding at the rate of twenty miles an hour,—nor yet at the rate of ten. He will

not be doing those wonderful things which men are made to do in hunting-plates. He will find himself neither encountering certain death by being chucked over his horse's head down a precipice half as high as the monument; nor will he make himself immortal by jumping rivers nearly as broad as Oxford Street. Let the tyro at once understand that the modicum of excitement is considerably less than that which the sporting pictures may have led him to expect.

And here perhaps it may be well to say a word or two about the dangers of hunting. That men do get falls is certain. Occasionally,—though very rarely, as will be apparent to any one making a calculation as to the percentage of such accidents on the number of men who hunt,—but occasionally a man breaks a collar-bone, or a rib or two, or even an arm or a leg. Now and again we hear of some fatal accident from which a man has died. We doubt whether there is any active amusement to which English men and women are attached, of which the same thing may not be said;—unless, perhaps, it be croquet,—as to which we have never yet seen a statement of the percentage of broken ankles; but the accidents of the hunting-field, as they occur among a multitude, and with results which are manifest and immediate, become at once known, whereas others of a different nature pass without our notice. If a comparative statement could be furnished, showing the number of girls who perish in a year from the ill effects of over-exercise in a ball-room, and also of the men who are killed in the hunting-field, we do not doubt on which side would be the greater mortality. Every summer men and boys are drowned when bathing. Every winter that brings us ice brings us also similar accidents from skating. Men suffer fatally from rowing,—as Mr. Skey has been at such pains to tell us. They blow themselves to pieces when shooting. They perish among the Alps. They are wrecked when yachting. They shoot one another at rifle practice. They become apoplectic over a whist table. And why not? It seems to us that at present there is a spirit abroad which is desirous of maintaining the manly excitement of enterprise in which some peril is to be encountered, but which demands at the same time that this should be done without any risk of injurious consequences. Let us have the excitement and pleasure of danger, but, for God's sake, no danger itself! This, at any rate, is unreasonable. A man's life is dear to himself, and dearer to his friends; but it is not so dear but that it may be advantageously risked for the sake of certain results. The amount of the risk must of course be made matter of inquiry by those who are too thoughtful to follow this or that pursuit because others follow it. We believe that in England, Ireland, and Scotland we possess above two hundred established packs of hounds;—that each pack hunts on an average three days a week, and continues to do so through twenty-five weeks of the year; and that an average of eighty horsemen are out with each pack on each occasion. We think that

this will show that one million two hundred thousand is the number of times that a man and horse in the course of the year go out together on this perilous adventure. If we say that a bone is broken annually in each hunt, and a man killed once in two years in all the hunts together, we think that we exceed the average. Our friends from this may find the amount of the risk they will run. For ourselves, we must confess that the incidents of a sedentary life strike us as being more dangerous.

We have ventured to tell our young friend not to expect too much. The runs of which he has read, and which took the gallant men who rode them twenty miles from point to point in something a little under two hours, will not come in his way. Eight miles an hour is a good average hunting pace. In a prolonged run, four miles in twenty minutes, without a check, is a fast burst, and will require a good man and a good horse to keep with hounds in a country that is fenced. A run continued through two hours with no more of a check than may come from casting right and left and then on, will tire any horse that is fairly weighted, if as much as sixteen miles of ground, or if, as is much more likely, fourteen or a dozen miles, have been covered from point to point. But no hunting man should count his pleasure by distance. Time and pace should be his standard. The time he can measure for himself. Pace he cannot measure accurately without measuring distance also;—but he will soon learn to know whether his horse is or is not required to move quickly. The cream of fox-hunting certainly consists in a quick run from a small covert. It should be straight, over a grass country strongly fenced, with a scent that shall enable the hounds to work on without assistance from the huntsman, in which the fox shall seek protection in no large wood, and which shall be brought to a finish by "a kill" in the open before the horses are tired, and with no necessity for cold-hunting at the close. From forty-five minutes to an hour is quite as much as is needed in time for the best run that can be ridden; and the forty-five minutes is generally much better than the hour.

We will now endeavour to explain the points of merit which we have named. The small covert is best,—as regards the individual run,—because the fox must break from it without being half-beaten by the hounds before he consents to leave its protection. And it is best again because the man who really means to ride will rarely fail of being able to get away from it with the hounds. From a large wood no horseman can be sure of a good start unless he rides through and through with the hounds as they hunt their fox within it. When he has done this it will not only be the fox that is half-beaten before the game begins. And the run should be straight. We fear we must acknowledge that this love for a straight line, which is the passion implanted more strongly than any other in the bosom of the

hard-riding fox-hunter, does not find its spring in neighbourly love or in general philanthropy. Looking on the sport as an outsider, one might be inclined to say that a fox running in a circle would be of all foxes the most convenient. The riders would then generally be brought nearer to their homes, the difficulties would be lessened by the curves, and they who did not begin with a good prospect would find things mending with them at every turn. But then, O my friend, things would mend not only with you, but with others also. And it may be that with you things will require no mending. You are away, at the side of the pack, with all done for you that Fortune and a quick look-out could do. Let the hounds go as straight as they will, they cannot rob you of your place. But a check, a curve to the right or to the left, any recreant touch of fear in the quarry's bosom tempting him to seek his old haunts, will in two brace of minutes bring down upon you the ruck of your dear friends which you have already had the extreme pleasure of leaving behind your back. To shake your friends off and get away from them, will soon come to be your keenest delight in hunting. To be there, in the proper place alongside of the hounds, is very sweet; but to know that others are not there is sweeter. To find that the beloved one of your heart has gradually fallen away from you and dropped behind, impeded probably by the depth of the ploughed land, or in difficulties with a distorted ditch, or still measuring with his eye some brook which you have cleared, perhaps because you could not hold your own horse;—this is delightful. To feel this is to feel the true joy of riding to hounds. But all this is lost if that recreant vermin should lose his heart and resolve to return to his own country. If any hard riding man were to tell us that he disregarded the straight running of a fox, we should think him the most philanthropical of men,—if we believed him.

And the run should be over a grass country, strongly fenced. As to the advantages of grass it will be unnecessary to say much. For all hunting purposes it is naturally better than ploughed land. Scent will lie on grass easily, when the upturned soil cannot hold it for a moment. And horses can live on grass and go gaily, who would die away from fatigue if called on to gallop over a ploughed field. Why the strong fences should also be desirable, it may be more difficult to explain. Every hunting man who knows what he is about, will avoid a jump whenever he can. A man who goes over a gate which can be opened does not know what he is about. But yet hunting without leaping would be very dull work;—and although each fence as it comes in the way is recognised as an enemy, as a thing which for the moment is detestable, yet, when it has been passed successfully, it becomes "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever." And then again, that leaving behind of your friends, which soon becomes the strong passion of the hunting man's heart, is much assisted by strong

impediments,—provided always that the impediments be not too strong for yourself also.

We have asked, too, for a strong scent,—a scent so strong that the huntsman should not be called upon to help his hounds. Our reader will understand that we are now speaking of the delights of riding to hounds rather than of those of seeing hounds hunt. It is our opinion that in a fast run, such as that of which we are speaking, few men observe the hunting of the hounds, let the hounds be ever so near to them. The rider is conscious of the contiguity which is so desirable in his eyes, and finds that he has enough to do to keep his place. And the hounds stream on, as though they were running to a view. There is no effort at hunting on their part, and the real work of maintaining the exact track of the fox is probably done by two or three of the leading dogs. A colder scent and slower work will no doubt display more of the hunting capacity of the pack;—and to an experienced sportsman the ingenuity of a huntsman's casting as he helps his pack will be an additional pleasure. In Squire Western's time this probably was the great delight of hunting. But now the sporting world has reached something, if not better in hunting, at any rate very different; and we have ventured to write these remarks with the understanding that of all virtues on the hunting-field the virtue of pace is to be first considered, and to be regarded as the most desirable.

We have asked that there shall come no large wood in the way of our beloved victim. A fox that has already shown us his mettle by running straight and freely, will often pass through even a large covert without hanging in it. Even if he tries an earth and finds it stopped, he goes on again for some still distant bourne with which he is acquainted. But nevertheless, the wood is a great impediment to the rider, and creates doubts in his mind which for the moment turn all his pleasure to a pain. He has many things to resolve in his mind. Which way does the wind blow?—for the fox will probably turn from the covert down the wind. And shall he ride the wood?—or shall he leave it to his right?—or shall he leave it to his left? He should know its size, its shape, and all its bearings before he can answer these questions with any certainty of judgment. Once more he must call on Fortune to assist him; and if the jade be false to him he may find even now, when he has done so much, that he has done nothing.

And then we have demanded "a kill" in the open, before the horses are tired, and with no necessity for cold-hunting at the close. The reader must understand that to kill his fox is the grand object of the Master; it is the grand object also of the huntsman, of his assistants, and of the hounds. Unless this be done with fair average frequency, the hounds will become useless, the farmers discontented, the old women furious, and hunting would, in fact, be impracticable.

The hunted fox should, if possible, be killed. No scarcity of game should stand in the way of this law, and there should be no protection other than that conferred on all females who, when condemned to death, can show that their position is one of peculiar interest. The vixen heavy with cub should be spared,—and none others. But the "kill in the open," for those who have lived and kept their place through the heat and turmoil of the chase, is a worthy reward of all their efforts. They see it, and none others do see it. They are saved from that poignant sense of deep injustice which fills the mind of the riding man with indignation when the tail of the hunt comes up to some covert in which the poor animal is being slowly pressed to his death, and every man there is equal with his fellow! He who has been in the lanes for the last half-hour is to be seen bustling round the covert, full of animation, as if he knew all about it! And he will come and discourse with you on the run, treating you perhaps as an equal, or, by the mass, perhaps as his inferior! He will tell you of what he has seen, give you his remarks on the "goodness of the thing," and nearly choke you with your own suppressed wrath;—for you will not choose to remind him that the run was really over six minutes before he came upon the scene. A "kill in the open" generally saves the successful men of the day from this misery. We have known a man,—nay, we do know a man,—great enough to be able to swear that he was there,—one out of five or six of whom each one knows all the others well,—while at the moment he was two miles off, trotting along with the old gentlemen and the young ladies; who will do so from day to day, till he really produces a semblance of belief in the minds of the uninitiated! But such a hero as that is not to be found in every hunt.

Such is the cream of hunting; but he who desires to know what pleasure hunting will really give him, should not expect delights such as these very frequently. There may be three or four such runs in a season; the man who hunts twice a week may have the chance of seeing two of them; and he will be a lucky man if, out of those two, he can live through one to the end. It is a joy that he will remember through all his days,—to which his memory will cling with a constancy which it will evince for but few other events of his life. But it is not to be thought, because such runs as these are few and far between, that therefore hunting in general is vapid and unsatisfactory. Men will grumble and growl; and they who come out oftenest will grumble and growl the most. We ventured in our former remarks to say of such men that they have an aptitude for getting out of bed on the wrong side. But there they are in spite of their grumbling,—and it is to be presumed that they would not come unless they were pleased. It is very joyous to gallop about a wood;—more joyous when the gallop is out of the wood. As we have said before, the society is much. And though that jealousy of riding of which we have spoken, and

which, whether it be bad or good, is ineradicable from the hunting-field,—though that feeling does exist and have strong sway, one does not always wish to be cutting down one's neighbour, and leaving one's friend in a ditch. There is, moreover, the real working of the hounds to be observed, which, as we have attempted to explain above, the sportsman can hardly watch, can hardly indeed see, when a whole pack is streaming along, in one continuous line, racing with each other as he is racing with that man on the other side of him.

That there are some miseries in hunting is true enough. A blank day,—that is, a day without any fox at all,—is an unpleasant incident. It does not often happen in a well-managed country, but such things are known. One is apt to think, when so great a catastrophe has occurred, with something of regret of the five pound which is being expended so ignominiously, and of all that might have been done with it. There is a shame attached to the utter failure as one drags oneself miserably from covert to covert in the gloom of the coming evening, which is distressing enough. And men become sombre, silent, and cross. They snarl and snap, and don't offer each other cigars. And the Master himself becomes a picture of misery that would melt a heart of stone. We know no more degrading position than that of a Master of hounds when he is driven to own that the day is blank. We believe that there have been Masters who, in thinly populated countries, have gone about provided with an animal in a bag, so that at last this absolute ignominy may seem to be avoided. And we have known of certain drains and holes, not many miles from the kennel, from which foxes would be bolted at three o'clock with a precision which certainly looked like foreknowledge. But in truth a blank is so terrible a misfortune that almost anything done to avoid it may be pardoned. We, ourselves, have often thought that a good drag home in the evening would on such occasions be very exhilarating to the spirits. And the weather is a frequent source of trouble. A hard lasting frost may be endured with equanimity. It is one of those misfortunes to which humanity is subject, but which, though very onerous, are of such certain occurrence, that humanity learns to endure them with patience. And then there is no tormenting doubt with a hard frost. The hunting man runs up to town, or puts his things in order about his house and farm, and consoles himself with thinking that his horses wanted rest. But those mornings which we may best describe as being on the balance, touch-and-go mornings, in which the sportsman does not know whether he will be wiser to go to the meet, or wiser to stay at home, are very bad. If he be energetic he goes, and meets five other energetic men, equally wretched with himself, and a servant from the Master, who tells him that the ground about the kennel is so hard that three men with a pickaxe can't touch it. If he be slack in his tendencies he lays in bed, and hears, the next time he is out, that at one o'clock the hounds

went beautifully, and that they had on that day "the run of the season." And there are other sorrows of a heavy kind coming from the weather. A high wind is very injurious to hunting, and makes riding to hounds almost impossible. A storm at night will cause the foxes to be stopped in their holes,—for a fox is much opposed to going abroad in bad weather. And bright sunshine is bad for scent. And hard rain is very uncomfortable. And muggy warm weather is not serviceable. The old song which proclaims the glories of a southerly wind and a cloudy sky was composed by some one who knew but little of hunting. It must be confessed that in hunting the weather is apt to be troublesome.

And there is the misery, fast increasing in these days, which comes from the too great number of men who hunt. With a field exceedingly numerous it is difficult to get a fox to break. It is the nature of the animal to be more afraid of men than he is even of hounds, and he will prefer to return to the covert, which is full of his canine enemies, to threading his way among horsemen. It becomes, therefore, incumbent on the field to leave as much space as possible clear round the covert, so that the fox may have room to start. The men should cluster together in one spot, and with a small number such clustering is to be managed. But when there are out from 200 to 300 horsemen it is almost impossible to save a covert from being surrounded. Then there is apt to be an unhappy spirit abroad, and ill-natured things are spoken. The Master threatens to take the hounds home, energetic young men ride about beseeching and praying;—and at last the fox is ignominiously hunted to death within his own domain.

There are miseries in hunting we admit,—attributable no doubt originally to Adam's fall and the imperfect nature of men.

We have undertaken to give some hints to the tyro in hunting, and in doing so we trust that our experienced readers will understand that we are not venturing to offer counsel to them. There is no matter in which men are more prone to think that their experience is better than that of others than they are in the matter of hunting. But the young man who only intends to hunt, will forgive us if we offer to him a few hints as the result of a long apprenticeship. Perhaps the first question to be touched is that of the distance to be overcome in getting to the meet. And here of course considerations of expense will present themselves. We do not ourselves love the rail either for our horses or for our own persons; but when the distance is very long it must be used. The objection in our mind is not in the morning,—but in the evening. It is a great nuisance to have to catch a train;—and almost a greater nuisance to wait for one. We do not think that horses in general suffer from such travelling, if they be properly clothed. Horse-sheets should always be brought as a matter of strictest necessity. It will occasionally

become expedient to send horses back by train when the need to do so has not been expected and no provision has been made. In such an emergency clothing should be bought, begged, or borrowed. There is another mode of obtaining it, open to some objection; but there are those who think even that preferable to sending a horse naked into a horse-box after a day's work. For shorter distances young men ride to meet, and older men go on wheels. We are now among the older men; but we used to delight in a fast hack,—thinking the sharp morning trot to be one of the delights of the day. Our rule in life has been to send horses on over night when the distance to the meet exceeds fifteen miles, and to let them go on the same morning for any lesser amount of travelling. Horses should travel to meet at about five miles an hour; and a hunting man can generally take his own horse as well as a groom can do so, if he have patience for the slow pace. He must also have the greater patience necessary for bringing him home;—but, in truth, the bringing of your horse home must usually be your own work. You may keep your hack out every day you hunt, and yet miss to use him two times out of three. If your distance home be usually very great it will be comparatively easy for you to find your supplementary conveyance;—as experience and a map will prove. In returning home it should be remembered that the horse loses as well as gains by a very slow pace. It is a great object to you that he should be in his stable and get his food as early as possible. You have probably brought your sandwiches and sherry with you. He has not. And yet, from his nature, he requires more frequent feeding than you do. Always get gruel for your horse on the first opportunity after the hunting is done. And if your horse have to stand in a stable waiting for a train, throw him a handful of corn,—a handful, and then another. He will eat that, when he will not touch a full feed.

Always go to the meet;—to the meet and not to the covert, to be first drawn. It may be known to you that you may save a mile or two, and perhaps half an hour in the morning, by sloping away to some wood-side. But the meet is announced for the convenience of the hunt in general, and you cannot go to the covert without doing an injury. Such tricks cause men to be hated,—justly; and you should remember that a Master has it always in his power to set your knowledge at defiance. He may change his mind as to the priority of that covert,—and will be very apt to do so if he finds that men act selfishly towards him.

There is great doubt in the minds of hunting men as to what is best to be done when an ordinary covert is being drawn. When the hounds are put into a small gorse of seven or eight acres, or into twenty acres of wood, there need be no doubt;—you should stand where others stand, and if you keep your eyes open and your ears, there is little doubt but that you will get away quite as near to the

hounds as is desirable. The difficulty applies to large coverts,—to woods, as to which it is open to you either to ride to the hounds as they are looking for their game and hunting it when found, or otherwise to remain stationary, saving your horse till you have learned that the fox is away. If you be a heavy man, with one horse, the waiting will certainly be your wisest decision. The question, however, will probably be decided by your temperament. It is not every man who can wait. And there is infinite difficulty as to the spot at which you should station yourself. There is a theory that foxes break down wind,—so as to run the way the wind is blowing. They thus decrease the power of the hound to catch the rising scent; and their instinct probably tells them that this is so. But the theory, we think, is not to be trusted. We have found that foxes break with equal good-will either up or down wind. After awhile, the instinct of which we have spoken is brought to bear, and the fox running up wind will turn and run down wind. He will find that his pursuers have an advantage from the wind, and will change his point. At one period of the year,—in the first weeks of February,—a dog-fox, found away from his own ground, will run home, let the wind blow which way it will. If, at last, you elect to be stationary, you can only stand where others stand who know what they are about better than you do. Move as they move, and learn to hunt with your ears. It is a great thing to know which way hounds are moving in covert from the notes of the huntsman's horn and the tones of his voice,—a great thing to know which way hounds are running from the tones of their voices. But this has to come of experience. For awhile the novice must go as others lead him, and must put his trust in others who have that knowledge which he lacks. Let him be careful not to trust in those who lack it themselves. There are men who have been hunting all their lives, and yet cannot get out of a field without some one to show them the way.

It is quite true that very much depends on getting away well with hounds,—that, indeed, as regards the best runs which are seen, all depends upon it. It occurs not unfrequently,—more often perhaps than not,—that hounds will check and throw up their noses and be at fault within the first half-mile out of covert, and that time will thus be given to those who have been unfortunate at first. But this arises from indifferent scent, and it will follow as a natural though not inevitable consequence, that the pace will be moderate throughout, and that no violence of performance will be needed on the part of the horsemen. The sport may be very good, but you, my tyro, whom I am specially addressing, will have no opportunity of distinguishing yourself. But we will suppose a morning on which the scent lies, the fox breaks gallantly and strongly, and the hounds come out after him with a burst, giving him almost no start of them at all. A fox hardly wants a start, for he can always beat the hounds for awhile.

A fresh fox will get away from a pack of hounds though he be in the very midst of them. On such an occasion as this it is everything to get well away; and that can only be secured by great watchfulness of eye and ear, and by constant attention to the thing that you are doing. It will seem to you to be the merest chance in the world; and yet, if you will observe a set of men hunting together for a season, you will find some six or seven who almost invariably are successful in getting away. These are the men who really think of the business in hand, and who in truth like to ride to hounds.

On this occasion you shall be among those who are fortunate. You shall have seen the fox break. Remember always that in this interesting moment it is your first duty to restrain yourself. Hold your tongue—and your horse. Some halloaing will be necessary, but there will be those there who know when and how to holloa. A cheer uttered too soon will bring the quarry back again. You will esteem us vain and futile if we tell you, now, in cold blood, not to ride on hard before the hounds; but when the time comes you will find yourself so tempted to do so that there are ten chances to one that you will be a sinner. You will forget the hounds in your excitement; and there will be veteran sinners,—cunning men, anxious to steal a march, who will lead you astray. You will sin certainly; but, when you have sinned, repent, and try to sin no more. But in the second field, having received some slightly sarcastic word of rebuke from the huntsman which you will take in good part, you will find yourself in your proper place behind the hounds,—and it will be well that you should be half a field on one side of them. Strive that they shall never be out of one field before you are into it. Do that, and you will be near enough. Fail to do so, and you cannot see them hunt. No man can do this always. The irregularity of the land, the difficulty of fences, and the uncertain running of the fox prevent it; but it should be your object in your riding to go as near to this as may be possible. In the doing it or the not doing it lies all the difference between riding to hounds and riding to men. Riding to men is a very pretty amusement, and many who hunt all their lives never get beyond it. You will soon perceive that not one man in ten of those who are out ever see the work of the hounds when they are running fast. But you will perceive also from the conversation of men that it is considered desirable to see the hounds hunt. My heroic friend of whom I have spoken will know every corner of a field in which the hounds "threw up,"—or, at least, he will know that there are but few able to contradict his assertion.

But you will soon find,—you, a neophyte,—that in the bustle and the hurry of the run, you have no time or mind left for anything but to sit on your horse, look after your fences, and take what care you can that that special man with a red coat and black boots and little bay horse does not get more ahead of you than you can help. You will

soon find arising in your heart a most unchristian hatred for that man;—and yet he will be of the greatest service to you. You will follow him over one fence after another; and should he fall, or the little bay horse be beaten in a heavy plough, or should he cease to be before your eyes from any cause that you will not understand, you will perceive that you have lost your guide. But you will still go on. You will have forgotten in your excitement all the lessons taught to you, as to seeing your way over the second fence from each field in which you are riding, as to watching the foremost hounds, as to going slow at timber and fast at water, as to a judicious trot on the plough, and the rest of it. For pace you will trust to your spurs; for management of the fences you will trust to your horse; for the course to be taken you will still follow some other guide whom you will unconsciously have chosen. And you will find yourself wishing that the gallant fox was not quite so gallant, and that he would succumb to the ardour of the hounds. It is not till the run is done and over that you will know how sweet and how glorious it was.

We are told that the great happiness of life is to have lived well and to have done with it. There is in the idea of this theory the necessity of a standing ground outside the world which looms to us cold and uncertain. But there is no doubt about the joy of having ridden well to hounds. To have done the thing well and then to say never a word about it, requires a certain conjunction of physical and mental attributes which almost ennobles a man. In speaking of the run which you have ridden well, the first personal pronoun should never be brought into use. No temptation should elicit from you an assertion that you have been nearer to hounds than others. Jealousy in riding is unavoidable. We will not even say that it is not commendable. But a triumphant rider is an odious man. And there is this also to be said of such a one;—that he who sins in boasting, will be presumed also to sin in lying.

Many other hints as to riding might be given to the beginner, were it not that we should become tedious by the overlength of our lesson. He will hear much of going straight; and we ourselves have said something of the charm of a straight-running fox. But that term of riding straight must be taken with many grains of salt. No man can ride really straight, or should attempt it. Open gates are preferable to high fences, even though some slight loss of ground should occur. Gaps are better than posts and rails. In most countries it is essential to know something of the nature of the landing on to which you are to jump. Roads should be used where the hunting of the hounds can be seen from them;—and are used very frequently when the hunting of the hounds cannot be seen at all. Crushing and rushing, bustling and hustling, cannot be avoided by energetic men whose bosoms are filled by an uncontrollable anxiety to be among the first; but they should be avoided as much as possible as acknowledged

sins. Such a mode of riding is in bad taste; and the sinner who sins and knows that he will sin again, should at least be aware that he is a sinner, and not glory in his defects. To abuse no one, and to take abuse easily,—if it be not of a nature beyond bearing,—should be the resolve of every young hunting man; and we may almost say of every elder also. What though a man should cross you at a fence?—what though he knock you over into a ditch?—what though he ride over you, which certainly is disagreeable? It is of the nature of the sport that it should be rough; and in all collisions each man thinks that the other is in fault. And faults of this nature in the hunting-field are so unavoidable, so unintentional, so certainly the result either of accident or of ignorance, that there is rarely room for anger. But there are many who cannot restrain themselves from sharp words. Such sharp words mean nothing, and are not worthy of a retort. This, however, may be a place proper for warning all young riders not to take their fences too near to those whom they are following. Of all dangers in the hunting-field the worst is that which comes from this offence. No man should allow his horse to follow another at a fence, till his leader is altogether clear from the impediment.

And now in our last lines we will say a word or two about the difficulties of the hunting-field, in order that they who have gone along with us so far may know that difficulties do exist, and that some allowance should be made for them. We shall not here speak of questions of expense, having attended to that subject in our former paper. Although hunting is as free to men nearly as the air that they breathe, they will find in most countries a class of farmers and landowners who object to have horses on their land. They will soon hear it asserted that these objectors are detestable fellows,—and that their objections are frivolous, if not wicked. A friend told us the other day that a man who was determined not to have foxes about his place must be a low Radical. There are men even in England, who do not care for hunting; and it will seem as reasonable to them to declare that a man who wishes to keep his drawing-room to himself must be a stupid Tory. Foxes about hen-roosts are not advantageous; nor do they assist in the preservation of pheasants. A couple of hundred of horsemen about a park, or even about a farm, do not make things look prettier than they were. Certain crops, such as beans and clover, are certainly injured by hunting; and no one can suppose that fences or gates are preserved by the manner in which the sport is conducted. A hunting man has no more legal right to trespass than another, though practice enables him to do so without risk of penalty to himself. All this should be remembered by those who are anxious for the preservation of foxes, and especially by those who do not themselves furnish land to be ridden over, or coverts to be drawn. Some indulgence should be shown to the feelings of non-hunting

men. If this be not done, it may be possible that the objections of the non-hunting men may become stronger than the custom in favour of hunting which still prevails.

And we think that many sportsmen are strongly disposed to expect that more shall be done for them by the Master, and his servants, and by the hunting capacities of the country, than is in truth practicable. We believe that good runs, and certainly that fast runs, are more frequent now than ever they have been since hunting became a sport in England. There is no means of testing accurately the truth of this opinion, and it is one very opposite to the complaints which generally meet our ears in the hunting-field. Men will be frequently heard to declare that hunting now is not what it used to be,—that foxes are scarce,—that they won't run,—that they never go straight,—and that the sport has become so bad, that it is hardly worth a man's while to go out to seek it. This, perhaps, is simply human nature, and is no worse than is said of all amusements and all occupations. Farmers are always being ruined. Trade is always dull. Nobody is ever thriving according to his own account. Nothing is so bad as the theatres. Dinner parties are so dull that it is a folly to go to them. Young men are detestable; and young ladies are so fast, furious, and forward, that they have to be avoided like firebrands. As everything at the present day is bad, why should not hunting be bad also? But not the less do men come out hunting. Arguing in this way, we might pass over the complaints made, were it not that they are effective in driving Masters and huntsmen to attempting more than can actually be done. A huntsman will often find himself driven to lift his hounds almost for miles, to guess the run of a fox, and even to make runs when he has no fox before him,—because so much is demanded from him. If runs manufactured after that fashion will suffice, so be it. We can manufacture them with a drag, so long as the farmers will allow us to ride over their lands on those terms. But if we do this, we shall lose the sport of fox-hunting. Our advice, therefore, to all sportsmen is this;—that they should not expect too much for their day,—and that they should not get out of bed on the wrong side.

"A SURPRISE."

"SHE is dead!" they said to him. "Come away;
Kiss her! and leave her!—thy love is clay!"

They smoothed her tresses of dark brown hair;
On her forehead of stone they laid it fair:

Over her eyes, which gazed too much,
They drew the lids, with a gentle touch;

With a tender touch they closed up well
The sweet thin lips that had secrets to tell;

About her brows and beautiful face
They tied her veil and her marriage-lace;

And drew on her white feet her white silk shoes;—
Which were the whitest no eye could choose!

And over her bosom they crossed her hands;
"Come away!" they said,—"God understands."

And then there was Silence;—and nothing there
But the Silence—and scents of eglantere,

And jasmine, and roses, and rosemary;
And they said, "As a lady should lie, lies she!"

And they held their breath as they left the room,
With a shudder to glance at its stillness and gloom.

But he who loved her too well to dread
The sweet, the stately, the beautiful dead,—

He lit his lamp, and took the key,
And turned it!—Alone again—he and she!

He and she; but she would not speak,
Though he kissed, in the old place, the quiet cheek.

He and she; yet she would not smile,
Though he called her the name she loved erewhile.

He and she; still she did not move
To any one passionate whisper of love.

Then he said, "Cold lips! and breast without breath!
Is there no voice?—no language of death?

" Dumb to the ear and still to the sense,
But to heart and to soul distinct,—intense?

" See, now,—I listen with soul, not ear—
What was the secret of dying, Dear?

" Was it the infinite wonder of all,
That you ever could let life's flower fall?

" Or, was it a greater marvel to feel
The perfect calm o'er the agony steal?

" Was the miracle greatest to find how deep,
Beyond all dreams, sank downward that sleep?

" Did life roll back its record, Dear,
And show, as they say it does, past things clear?

" And was it the innermost heart of the bliss
To find out so, what a wisdom love is?

" Oh, perfect Dead! oh, Dead most dear,
I hold the breath of my soul to hear!

" I listen; as deep as to horrible hell,
As high as to heaven!—and you do not tell!

" There must be pleasures in dying, Sweet,
To make you so placid from head to feet!

" I would tell you, Darling, if I were dead,
And 'twere your hot tears upon my brow shed.

" I would say, though the angel of death had laid
His sword on my lips to keep it unsaid.

" You should not ask, vainly, with streaming eyes,
Which of all deaths was the chiefest surprise;—

" The very strangest and suddenest thing
Of all the surprises that dying must bring."

Ah! foolish world! Oh! most kind Dead!
Though he told me, who will believe it was said?

Who will believe that he heard her say,
With the sweet soft voice, in the dear old way;—

" The utmost wonder is this,—I hear,
And see you, and love you, and kiss you, Dear;

" And am your Angel who was your Bride;
And know, that though dead, I have never died."

E. A.

FASHION IN POETRY.

When we consider the vast scope of Poetry, so vast that it extends beyond the exact definition of language; when we remember that the Poet's thoughts may clasp in a new harmony all Earth, all Heaven, all Hell; may out of his subtle combinations of the known and familiar raise a world unknown and marvellous; that, next to God himself, the Poet is the greatest Creator; that wherever human thought, human feeling, human fancy, and human passion can follow him, there he may lead; when we contemplate this immense sovereignty, it seems very strange to see it in association with a word so narrow in its significance as that of Fashion. For if judgment is the sovereignty of reason, poetry is the sovereignty of imagination; and the imagination of man has not yet penetrated so far as to discover its own limits. All truth is open to the eye of the Poet; it is his high office to sound its secret depths, to touch it with his sharp sense wherever it may hide; and with his special gift of sweet proportion in sound to give it utterance; so that by his music, which rouses and stirs whatever imaginative emotion there is in men of less vivid perception, the delicate mysteries of Nature come to be unveiled and recognised. The passion of the Poet detects and brings to light the secret analogies between the visible and invisible worlds, and shapes them into song. His acute sensibilities respond to the invocations of Nature in her softest breathings; and through them the highest beauty is revealed to him. It is his art to communicate his impulse to all capable humanity in words of rhythmic order. We hold a rhythmic order to be essential to the true Poet; though some great authorities,—amongst others Ben Jonson and Sir Philip Sidney,—would admit a claim to the title without it. A little reflection will show that this is wrong, and that measured sound or rhythm, in the expression of the Poet's idea, must be accepted as a distinct boundary-line between the provinces of Prose and Poetry; otherwise, the Poet's domain would be subject to continual invasion and perplexed by uncertain rights, and great confusion would be the result throughout the world of letters. It does not follow that all rhythm is poetry because we cannot accept poetry without rhythm. This is far from being the case;—for of a large quantity of rhythm daily produced, a very small portion is even poetical; and between poetical rhythm and poetry proper, there is still a wide interval. We are not disposed to admit the author of "Mother Hubbard" into the ranks of poets; although

it is a piece of versification of which the popularity is indisputable, and although it is not entirely deficient in the poetic or tragic elements. In the old lady's evident destitution; in her careful yet hopeless search through her cupboard for something to satisfy her dog's hunger; in his disappointment when nothing is found; in her subsequent hurried walk to the baker's to purchase bread for him; and in the sight of her dead dog which meets her on her return, there is room for the excitement of emotion and compassion;—but the treatment of the circumstances makes them ludicrous. The language is puerile; the introduction to Mother Hubbard and her dog is abrupt; neither their qualities nor their relative positions are made known to us so as to affect our sympathies; and the happy ending, by its suddenness and impossibility, offends all the rules of art, and is not less ludicrous than the cheerful termination of King Lear, introduced as an improvement to Shakspeare's tragedy by Tate, and played as such by Garrick and Kemble. It is not the simplicity of the story, but its incongruity and its poverty of expression and detail, which deprive it of pathos. The simple stanzas which tell the history of the Babes in the Wood are to be found often included in the same volume of nursery rhymes which contains the only known event in the life of Mrs. Hubbard; but the authors of the two works have nothing else in common; for whoever invented or narrated the life and death of those forlorn children, had in him the genius of a poet. Their mutual love, their tender beauty, their soft submission, their helplessness and their quiet death, the sympathy of Nature in their end, the compassion figured in the action of the little birds, who, after their own manner, perform the burial of the infants, and chant their requiem; all these incidents are so assembled together as to affect the imagination with the poetry of pity; and this unpretending ballad is seldom read without tears. Its metrical form has enough of music in it to give an additional impulse to the emotion, and to make that forcible impression on the memory which is effected by rhythmic order.

The sensibility to the measure of sweet sound leads the Poet on as he writes; he is stirred by his own harmonies, and his thoughts are marshalled to a tune like soldiers stimulated by the appeal of trumpet and drum; while, on the other hand, the rhetorical prose writer, with his mind full of brilliant imagery and passionate impulse, may find himself uncomfortably fettered by the limits of numbered lines; may find in them fences restricting the bound of his imagination, and may become stiff and awkward if he adopts the form of poetry for the expression of his idea. It is probable that if Edmund Burke had written in verse, he would not have been a poet; though if we could admit a rich, abundant, and passionate imagination, associated with language copious and harmonious, to characterise a poet,—without the law of recurring numbers,—he would take a degree in poetry far above that of Pope or Goldsmith. But his works not being

pulded into the symmetry of verse, are not poems, though they e overflowing with poetical affluence.

Every art has its necessary restriction, its form or fashion; but hion, whatever the original signification of the word, represents w, in its habitual use, a narrowing of form. Fashion is the evalent custom in some particular direction; it is the taste in gue, and it is led frequently by a small section of the public, seek- g for a stimulus or for distinction in some evident excess. Fashion, we understand it in ordinary parlance, is a departure from just oportion; an overbalancing of some special quality,—whether we eak of it in reference to costume, to deportment, to architecture, sculpture, to painting, to music, to letters generally, or to that rticular art of letters which is poetry.

If we glance back at the progress of poetry in England from the ne of Chaucer to the present day, we shall see periodical fluctua- ons in its fashion hardly less distinct than those of dress. Chaucer himself was a leader, not a follower; he devised his own form; and, indeed, at that period, in English verse, there was nothing to be followed. He looked to the Italians for suggestions of story, but his manner of telling his story was original. Spenser is less true and vigorous, because the vice of imitation is apparent in his composition. He imitates Chaucer's language, then out of date, and in his elaborate love strains and artificial conceptions of human life he is a plagiarist of Ariosto. He reflects the fashion of his period, the fashion then being Italian; and the extent to which he reflects it is the measure of his departure from truth. But he has sweet tones of his own; promptings of a tender inward music which lift his work into the regions of delight, beyond the sterility of imitation. Sidney's poetry, —of the same school,—was also disfigured by laboured fancy too long drawn out, and by an over-studious cultivation of the passion of love. The imitated affectations of the pastoral style cling about him; but in many of his sonnets true feeling prevails over forced sentiment, and his best compositions charm the ear and the heart by their melodious sadness. It would seem from his essay, written in the defence of poesy, that the poets were objects of popular contempt in his day, and of general animadversion. It was the moment of rest before action, the receding of the waters before the roll of the great billow. Neither was meditative poetry nor dramatic poetry,—which is poetry in action,—in circulation at this time; but in the drama the first chord was sounded which was to find its consummation in a music so majestic, so rich, so rare in its fulness and power, that it can never be sur- passed, and has not yet been equalled. The tragedy of "Gorboduc," the joint work of Thomas Norton, and of Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, shook off the trammels imposed by a servile respect for Greek models, and moved bravely free from the unities of time and place. This liberty of action was in itself a merit,—a sign of an independent will

in the authors; and some fine and vigorous passages occur in the dialogue,—passionate thoughts clad in rich garb, such as well became the ambassadors of a coming glory.

Shakspeare and his fellow-labourers for the stage, for the most part, moved in ways of their own. They cast off the forms of antiquity and the fashions of Italy; and though many of their plots were taken from Italian story, their treatment of the subject had nothing of the Italian manner. A free range was given to the imagination; passion expressed itself boldly, and with an endless variety of speech. All the resources of the English language were called into play, and it sounded harmonies unknown before. But while the larger number developed beauty out of freedom, Ben Jonson and a few others kept within the limits of fashion, and marred their intellectual gifts by a pedantic exhibition of them,—for pedantry was the fashion of that day. In costume, the starched ruff of the period, parading all its material in a stately display, surrounding the head it sought to adorn with an extensive encumbrance of artificial construction, bears some analogy to the stiff, laboured decorations of thought then in vogue with classical writers. And might not some such analogy be traced between the fashion of letters and the fashion of garments through other ages? Can we not discern it in the loose style of Charles II.'s time, with its fine fripperies and lace decorations; with its ribands knotted where knots are needless, suggesting a deficiency on some fair necks;—with its fastidious trimmings lavishly employed, and decent covering omitted? This style in dress ran parallel with licentiousness of thought in the poets, combined with an attention to arbitrary trifling rules which constitute the etiquette of poetry. The general formality of apparel, of head-dress and hoop, coat and waistcoat, in the reigns of Anne and the Georges, goes side by side with the cold, carefully trimmed couplets, regular and monotonous versification and elaborated simile of the poets of the same period; and though this resemblance may seem somewhat fanciful, it is not impossible, or even improbable, that the same influences which affect the general character of the nation, the spirit of which is reflected in the national poetry, have their direct bearing also upon the fashion of dress. But this is a point on which we will not insist. It is enough to say that poetry goes through distinct periodical phases, modes which flow out of that tendency to imitation which may be called a law of humanity. The original poet, directly his power is recognised, is followed by numerous counterfeits. This attempt at reproduction is, in many cases, perhaps even in most, unconscious: poetical temperaments are forcibly struck by the poet's genius, and fall into endless vibrations of sympathy, which they mistake for the vital impulse. Out of this mistake a vast number of poems is produced which are barren of poetry and prolific in such tricks of style as result from exaggerated impressions of the master's manner. In illustration of this fact, we may quote

some of the proceedings of a fictitious character, drawn with much skill by that distinguished American writer, Wendell Holmes, in his novel of "The Guardian Angel." He introduces us to a respectable young shopman, by name Gifted Hopkins, who is the admired poet of a village in New England. Gifted Hopkins produces an interminable succession of poems, which are continually appearing in the local journal, the "Banner and Oracle," and which are marked by all the peculiarities of the Laureate's manner. In short, Gifted Hopkins is the type of the second-hand poet, who helps to set a fashion going. But now let him speak for himself;—

"'I become more and more assured, Cyprian,' he said, leaning over the counter, 'that I was born to be a poet. I feel it in my marrow. I must succeed. I must win the laurel of fame. I must taste the sweets of——'

"'Molasses!' said a bare-headed girl of ten, who entered at that moment, bearing in her hand a cracked pitcher. 'Ma wants three gills of molasses.' Gifted Hopkins dropped his subject, and took up a tin measure. . . . made an entry on a slate of 08, and resumed the conversation.

"'Yes; I am sure of it, Cyprian. The very last piece I wrote was copied in two papers. It was "Contemplations in Autumn." Poetry to me is a delight and a passion. I never know what I am going to write when I sit down; and presently the rhymes begin pounding in my brain . . . and then these rhymes seem to take possession of me like a surprise party, and bring in all sorts of beautiful thoughts, and I write and write, and the verses run measuring themselves out like——'

"'Ribbins,—any narrer blue ribbins, Mr. Hopkins. Five-eighths of a yard, if you please, Mr. Hopkins?'

"Mr. Gifted Hopkins resumed, 'I do not know where this talent of mine comes from. My father used to carry a chain for a surveyor sometimes, and there is a ten-foot pole in the house he used to measure land with. I don't see why that should make me a poet. My mother was always fond of Dr. Watts's hymns; but so are other young men's mothers, and yet they don't show poetical genius. But wherever I got it, it comes as easy to me to write in verse as to write in prose, almost.'"

The lines which follow will serve as a specimen of the poetry which came so easy:—

> "Oh, daughter of the spiced South,
> Her bubbly grapes have spilled the wine
> That staineth with its hue divine
> The red flower of thy perfect mouth."

The village poet's friend, on hearing them, said,—

"'You modelled this piece in the style of a famous living English poet, did you not?'

"'Indeed, I did not. . . . I never imitate.'"

When the poetical young shopman spoke thus, he no doubt believed in himself as many others believe in themselves; and his friend kept silence, as friends will keep silence on such occasions.

The law of reaction operates unfailingly in all human affairs, and by its intervention, imitation, or Fashion, turns into new courses, finds out a new model when the old one has served its turn, and generally chooses it as unlike as possible to the last. This reaction is often sudden and startling, but sometimes is reached by gradual approaches. The striking opposition between the poetical style of the eighteenth and nineteenth century is the result of a series of changes, slowly begun, growing more violent as they draw near the climax.

Thomson, Goldsmith, Gray, and Cowper,—nor should we omit the name of Akenside,—began to feel their way out of the regions of cold didactic art, where Nature appeared only in glimpses;—and even then in a French disguise, advancing towards the dominion of truth and beauty. Goldsmith has little of the emotion and none of the passion, and therefore none of the creative power, of the Poet; but he has a sweet, though somewhat monotonous, versification, a soft sympathy with sorrow, and a delicate sense of beauty. He is an exact describer, a poetical painter rather than a Poet; but it must be remembered, in judging of his merits, that he painted what his predecessors had failed to see. Thomson, it may be urged, had some fine perceptions of Nature, and he moved in front of Goldsmith. This is true: but he had not the simplicity of Goldsmith's manner; and, though he was alive in a considerable degree to the influences of Nature, his representations of her beauty are often far from natural. Cowper, who belongs to the same cluster of morning stars heralding daylight, had a wider range of thought than Goldsmith, but his meditations had too much of the moral distinct from the poetical character, and he was capable of being not only prosaic, but prosy. Thomas Gray appeared in the full dawn of this opening light, tinged with the glory of the unveiled sun. And now Poetry, waking from her long, cold trance, rousing herself from inaction, began to show the exultation of returning life. Under the thrall of no special fashion she moved to new measures, and made music out of all forms of beauty. Burns, in his national dialect, sang undying strains of patriotism and of love; Scott stirred martial enthusiasm with his metrical romance; Campbell sounded a full blast from his war trumpet; Southey, in new strange numbers, harmonious though strange, told tales of wonder, bringing tropical splendour to our sunless shores; Landor wrote classical verse with copious imagery and original thought; Shelley lifted up a song brilliant as that of his own skylark; Keats, inspired by forms of antique beauty, poured out lays of sweet enchantment, and with a new embroidery enriched old fable; and Byron uttered his imaginary wrongs in a moan so musical that he constrained the whole civilised world to

a sudden sympathy, which, for a time, threw every other form of beauty into the shade. He had varied forms of versification, vivid perceptions, and passionate thought, which deserved the admiration of an instructed audience; and he had also exaggerations and grimaces such as please the vulgar, so that he soon became the exclusively popular poet, the favourite model, and the leader of a Fashion which lasted as long as such fashions ever do last. And after that was over came the reign of Wordsworth. Wordsworth was the exact opposite of Byron. His passion was not personal; he wooed Nature with meditative devotion; he listened religiously to her inspirations; he carried no storms into her heart; he suffered her beauty to sink gently into his soul; he sought in her secret influences the sweetness of a divine compassion and the dominion of an eternal hope; in philosophical communings with the invisible he saw God reflected in the universe. Out of the lowest forms he could redeem beauty; not merely the flower and the leaf, the daisy and the primrose, touched his tender thought; every type of suffering humanity, however tainted, won from him the music of sorrow; every utterance of sadness found its answer in his soul; he gathered to his heart all shapes of grief, and it vibrated into melody under the force of pity. It was not his own complaint that stirred the impulse of his song. His poetry was evolved out of the contemplation of things beyond him; out of a present prevailing evil he could shape a remote good. He was an essentially intellectual poet; a poet of substance more than of show, of an imagination more profound than vivid. He was one who strove rather to subdue or to ennoble passion than vehemently to agitate it. He rose as a revolutionary poet, casting off the pageantry and pomp of an ancient dynasty, indifferent to the conventionalities of poetical language, and cultivating great simplicity of diction. He broke down the trim hedge-rows, and opened a new wide field of poetry full of fair varieties. He supplied fresh material for thought to the rising generation; the opposition that he met from the critics acted as a stimulus to his admirers, and all the thinking youth of England enlisted under his banner. In some of his early poems his love of lowly and natural subjects, and of simple language, led him into an exaggeration of triviality; and his ballads of "Betty Foy" and "Peter Bell" were rather fitted for nursery rhymes, to be lisped by infantine lips, than for the gratification of educated men and women. But this exaggeration was probably the cause of his subsequent popularity, because it startled the public into attention by its novelty. It was the penny trumpet which announced the entrance of a monarch on the scene.

Ultimately Wordsworth became the founder of an institution of poetry and metaphysics, setting a fashion both in the method of thought and in the method of language which expressed it. Coleridge, who was his contemporary, and in some measure his colleague, did not produce the same moral effect. He was more felicitous in his

diction, and he was more generally melodious; but he was less true in feeling; his sympathies were less extensive, and his imagination was less capable of a sustained effort. He may be regarded as an usher in the school of which Wordsworth was the head-master.

Wordsworth's supremacy over the growing mind of the nation endured for a period of fifteen years, during which time a great deal of prose in measured lines was perpetrated, plagiarising the defects of his art, and falling altogether short of its excellence; and a great deal of maudlin sentiment was brought into play, aping his finer feeling. But whatever failures arose out of the endeavours to counterfeit the manner of his muse, her inspirations awakened in many souls sensibilities not hitherto cultivated. Needy sickness and neglected and sometimes repulsive infirmities were invested with a new kind of imaginative and tender interest. Wordsworth was sometimes guilty of unmusical lines, of trivial language, and of a diffuseness of style, which, even in prose, could hardly be excused; but he was never guilty of an ignoble thought. When he was at his best he was such that few could equal him in beauty; and at all times the suggestions of his poetry were of that kind which tended to enlarge the sphere of benevolent impulses, and to strengthen the best affections. Though fashion has for the present declined from him, it is to be hoped that taste will return for the study of his most excellent productions, and that he is not to occupy for long the position of a decayed poet.

In commenting on the qualities in poetry which so affect the public mind as to lead a fashion, we are induced to meditate what causes operate to exclude the productions of a great poet from immediate popularity. And as such a popularity must be obtained by the approbation of the uncultivated and unthinking masses, we may conclude that it is forfeited by the absence of some such prominent peculiarity as strikes blunt sensibilities or an ignorant apprehension. Now, a prominent peculiarity is a fault, and therefore a perfect work of art will never command fashion until sufficient time has elapsed for the circulation of the verdict of perfect judges. An immediate popularity should be regarded with great distrust by an author whose aim is really excellence.

Milton neither followed nor established any fashion. He drew his inspirations from sources of infinite variety; and while he made all poetry his study, both in art and nature, his works do not suggest the special manner of any poet; nor had he any mannerism of his own. His rich harmonies recall something of the music of the Elizabethan dramatists, but there is nothing like a direct imitation of them, and the general scope of his thought is very different. A puritanic gravity modifies his sense of beauty, and his thoughts lift him above the smoke and stir of our earth. Wordsworth comforts earthly sorrow by sharing in it; Milton seeks to raise men's ideas to the heaven beyond it. Milton is more admired than read. His fame is universal; his works are a

necessity in every library; and pieces of his poetry are got by heart in schools; but he is seldom taken down from the shelf to be fondly handled; and many a young lady, who knows her Tennyson as well as her prayer-book, would be puzzled if she were asked who wrote "Comus," "Lycidas," and "Samson Agonistes." Like all great poets, he has been plagiarised in particular passages; but he has had no band of loving disciples striving to reflect his forms of beauty. His long, rolling sound, storing up power and delaying the climax, majestic as heaven's own thunder, or as the swelling billows on a smooth, wide shore, awes rather than entices the imagination, and the student shrinks from anything like an attempt at reproduction. Therefore, Milton stands alone, apart from Fashion in Poetry; and therefore we have not introduced his name according to chronological order in these pages.

We have shown how Wordsworth took a high place in popular favour. It is time to speak of Tennyson, who succeeded him. In the glow of Tennyson's light Wordsworth's has paled almost to the point of extinction. There are so few instances of resemblance between the two poets, that it is hardly worth while to point out the difference. Tennyson's poetry is not slowly gathered out of meditation on external objects; it springs from a creative force, a vital inspiration and impetuous movement of the brain or heart, or both, which agitates every thought, and constrains every outward form of existence to sympathy with its own varying moods. Nature is compelled to consort with his fervent Genius. Under his dominion she is seldom suffered to rest. All her attributes undergo a change in the transitions of his swift emotion. In one of its phases, Time is a maniac, scattering dust, and Life a fury, slinging flame; in another, the stars are innumerable cold, pitiless eyes; in another, the blossoms dropped by the laburnum are wells of fire: in almost all there is a stir and glow, endless vibration, without any apparent point of rest. Goldsmith's "pensive hour" is unknown to Tennyson; his thought is passionate, not still. All his perceptions are intense. His pictures are coloured as vividly as Turner's; his piercing vision descries objects unseen by ordinary eyes, assembles images from far-off worlds, and concentrates a whole universe of beauty into the space of a single line. In his power of concentration he is equalled by only one other poet, and that one is Dante. But he has not the sustained power of Dante, because he has not the same capability of repose. It is in the prophet's chariot of fire that he ascends his heaven of invention, and woe be to the mortal man who seeks to hang on to that flaming car! Yet how many do seek it,—how many, clinging to its blazing wheels, rise but a short way to fall down in a fatal swoon, which leaves them delirious for ever. That they should mistake this delirium for the spirit of the prophet is a thing worthy of lamentation, but it is inevitable that their mistake should last till

they have passed away altogether, and posterity has decided on their claims. What matter? say some indulgent critics. Why should they not enjoy a pleasant delusion? And if their works obtain a temporary popularity, who should grudge it to them? To this we reply, —It is of infinite matter to art that bad art should be suppressed, and it is a subject for serious regret that a great poet should have given the impulse to an evil fashion. The school of Tennyson is sensuous as the school of Wordsworth was spiritual. A tendency to excess in warmth of colour and in passionate sensation, which distinguishes Tennyson as a poet, is so exaggerated by his disciples as to approach insanity. They are in a perpetual whirlwind; their consciousness of life consists in successive storms of passion; they are perpetually on the fret; and Nature, which, according to Wordsworth, never did betray the heart that loved her, assaults them with perpetual rage and unlimited treacheries. No peaceful green spots for them! Every blade of grass is a tongue of fire; every branch of a tree is an inimical, cruel arm; the stars throb like fevered pulses; the morning dewdrop is a scalding tear; the heavens are either lurid or so importunately blue that they affect the soul with a sense of oppression; seas are streaked in crimson as with blood; kisses are red; thoughts are red; corn-fields are sanguinary with the fatal poppy's dye; you move in a general conflagration; trouble and heat prevail everywhere; nothing is comfortable, and nothing is cool. The compensation which the poets seek from this state of things is an occasional excess of bliss,—a swooning under too much sweetness, —a joy prolonged upon the edge of pain,—a languor generated by overwhelming perfume,—an intoxication proceeding from too deep a draught of beauty,—a sharp agony from the scent of a woman's hair, —a general smothering under silken hangings and purple coverlets. This poisonous luxury may be welcome as a variety of pain, but it is very unlike peace. It is mere physical excitement; and it has no tendency to exalt the imagination.

Another fault of this school of poetry is a prodigality of imagery. Images succeed each other so fast, that they cease to make an impression; and the mind of the reader is overloaded and weary. The highest art of the poet suggests more than it gives, and leaves the stimulated imagination with space for fresh weaving, and a margin for some further embroideries of the fancy. When this is done there is a spiritual union between the poet and his disciple; and there is a great delight afforded by the consciousness of an intellectual expansion and growing sensibilities. A little song introduced into a work called "Phantastes," by a writer too little known as yet, may be quoted here as a model of this kind of excellence:—

"Alas! how easily things go wrong—
A sigh too much, or a kiss too long,

And there follows a mist and a weeping rain,
And life is never the same again.

"Alas! how hardly things go right—
'Tis hard to watch, in a summer night,
For the sigh will come, and the kiss will stay,
And the summer night is a winter day."

There is a whole history of sweet sorrow suggested in these two simple stanzas;—suggested, not told. The reader's fancy is touched with the sad music of this compassionate strain; not limited by exact details of the broken promise, the lost hope, or the shame and the separation. A profound pathos surrounds the subjects thus dealt with; it leaves food for tender meditation and sacred pity. The seed of sympathy thus dropped in the heart has room to strike deep roots and bring forth fruit and flower.

An author of the more fashionable school, the school of excess, would never have left the topic so unfettered. How many cold moons, how many crimson suns, how many quivering stars, how many leapings of hot blood, how many stings and agonies, how many images of death and slaughter and ravine, how many curses on false creeds and disquisitions on criminal codes, and racking winds, and cracking leaves, and sea storms, and fiery embracings, and wild pulsations, such a poet would have brought to bear upon the song, till the listener sank beneath the burden, unable to conceive another idea!

All the faults of the school of exaggeration have reached their full consummation in the genius of Mr. Swinburne. He has the fatal gift of a facility of melodious expression which far outruns his power of thought and imagination. He has a considerable repertory of fine words, but they are employed to decorate a gross imagination and an unsound thought. The want of solid matter to work with has reacted perniciously on the manner of his diction, and made it an instrument eminently fit for disguising the want of a clear meaning when it is absent, and eminently unfit for expressing it when it is present. Swinburne's melody itself, though undeniably admirable in some passages, is not faultless. The trick of alliteration is enticing for a time, but once discovered and thrust upon the attention, becomes very wearisome; and to obtain the effect of versification great violence is done to the language; startling transpositions, reckless disregard of all order in construction, are the very rules of Swinburne's composition. Sonorous epithets are profusely scattered, which cannot possibly make sense with the noun nearest to them; a wild and unbounded license is the law of the poet, who seems to think mere abundance the essence of poetry, as if the fairy's decree of the dropping of toads from the mouth at every spoken word was no less precious than that of pearls, if only the quantity ejected were equally large.

Whoever undertakes to read one of Mr. Swinburne's works all

through, will have much depravity to encounter. He seems to pray for degradation, as Milton prayed for elevation of thought, before he wrote. He revels in an imagination foul as Vulcan's stithy. In his attempt to exalt vice, he has lowered his art. Big-sounding words will not compensate for the want of great ideas; and the love of the beautiful, which is the foundation of all art, is continually revolted by Mr. Swinburne. His play of Chastelard may be instanced as an example of his want of artistic skill. It is so tedious,—though not long,—that the student finds it a heavy labour to reach the end of the volume. This tediousness is due to the monotony of uninterrupted vice,—and to its untruth. Every personage and every statement in this play is of that kind to which we should say, "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity."

Mary Stuart, bad enough in history, is made worse in Mr. Swinburne's representation. She is base in semblance as well as in fact, and her presence on the scene is a constant offence, because it has not the compensation of contrast from the introduction of any other virtue. Regan and Goneril were as bad, but they had an innocent sister; and in all Shakspeare's plays, and in all true pictures of life, the existence of some good will be discerned. Mary Stuart's coarse fondling of the lover whom she dooms to execution, is hardly endurable; but her lover knows it, and tolerates it, and adores her, and blasphemes God for her sake. According to their degree her waiting-maids also are vicious, following her example at a respectful distance; and at last, when Murray appears upon the scene,—Murray whom history recognises as an upright man,—and we hope for something less ignoble to dwell upon, he acts as ill as all the rest.

A sameness of wickedness is not less fatiguing than a sameness of virtue, and is less excusable; for if a man be tiresome by seeking to instil goodness, we at least give him credit for a benevolent intention. Nor can unmeasured criminality be redeemed by such supposed graces of poetry as are assembled to make up the excess of Mr. Swinburne's style. When Chastelard, awaiting his execution, apostrophises the Queen his mistress, the insanity and grossness of his thought, his wordy rant,—which we feel to be rant because it is not true passion,—the disgusting images which he calls up, turn aside all sympathy. We have not space to quote many of the lines, nor if we had should we wish to do it; but here is a specimen which our readers may judge:—

> "Ah! in my weary, dusty space of sight,
> Her face will float with heavy scents of hair;
> And fire of subtle amorous eyes and lips,
> More hot than wine, full of sweet wicked words,
> Bubbled against mine own lips . . . . . .
>
> "I do believe
> This fire shall never quite burn out to the ash,

And leave no heat and flame upon my dust,
For witness where a man's heart has burnt up.
For all Christ's work this Venus is not quelled,
But reddens at the mouth with blood of man,
Sucking between small teeth the sap o' the veins;
Dabbling with death her little tender lips,
A bitter beauty, poisonous pearled mouth.

"Ah! fair love,
Fair fearful Venus made of deadly foam,
I shall escape you somehow with my death.
Your splendid supple body and mouth on fire,
And Paphian breath that bites the lips with heat.
I had best die . . . . . ."

We have selected this passage as one of the most moderate, least strained, and least unpleasant of Mr. Swinburne's amorous rhapsodies. This false art may strike some fancies by its violence, but it will never satisfy a disciplined judgment or a cultivated imagination, and therefore it will not outlive its own hour. So let it live and let it die.

We do not require unmixed strains of aspiring virtue, nor personages who are models of perfection, nor anything that has in it the untruth of disproportion. In its balance of good and evil the drama of the poet should represent the actual drama of life, only raised somewhat by those exalted moods of the imagination and by those assembled treasures of language which give life to poetry.

In the plays which have outlived the fashion of their day we shall find all these qualities. They are apparent in Goethe's "Faust" and "Egmont," in Schiller's "Wallenstein" and "Don Carlos," in Henry Taylor's "Artevelde" and "St. Clement's Eve;"—and these works are fit subjects for careful study.

They show humanity in its strength and weakness; and the intellectual vigour of the poet is paramount throughout. The great dramatist has a mastery over his own passion which enables him perfectly to conceive and to shape that of his fictitious characters, and his personal presence is only recognised by the skill and wisdom of his work. This is eminently true of the tragedy of "Wallenstein" and the dramatic poem of "Artevelde."

In "Wallenstein" there is great variety and distinctness of character without any excess of perfection or of atrocity; there is human frailty, and even baseness, to be found in it, but there is also high thought and noble action, and the beauty of the poem is heightened by a pure and tender love pervading it. There is the keen sense of beauty, which is the Poet's special privilege, combined with the fruits of meditation and the experience of life. There are no puling, sentimental, nor overstrained agonies to oppress the reader. It is an excellent work of art.

"Artevelde" is so far a drama of the same order that it also deals

with historic events, and with life in camps and battle-fields, and shows in the principal character a somewhat rare combination of profound reflection and energetic action. But the dominion of the judgment over the imagination is more complete in "Artevelde" than in "Wallenstein," and it exhibits more power of concentration. Schiller's fault as a poet is diffuseness, by which he loses force. Henry Taylor is terse in expressions, his thought finds the right word at once and does not exhaust its energy by a needless expansion. He is therefore never tedious; but if the drama of Artevelde has more masculine strength than that of "Wallenstein" it has less ideal beauty, especially in those scenes which treat of the tenderest relations between man and woman. Schiller's Thekla is a woman invested with divine attributes, but still instinct with the feelings of humanity. Taylor's Adriana is a fine vision without substance and therefore without personal identity; a gleam of light which has its source in heavenly regions, and stirs hopes and yearnings beyond our horizon, but which is a cold radiance conveying to us none of the glow of human affection. The decline of Artevelde, after the loss of his pure bride Adriana, to a passionate affection for the fallen woman Elena, has been a subject of censure to many critics, because it degrades the hero of the drama; but as the circumstance is treated, it is not poetically untrue. The condition of mind which accompanied Artevelde's sinking fortunes, with the loss of his heart's best hope, laid him especially open to the access of that strong compassion which first moved his thought towards a wretched woman; young, beautiful, and misused. Adriana is the poet's aspiration, his ideal of human love. Elena is the centre of his pity. And thus the most passionate emotions of a poetic imagination are embodied,—the striving after the divine light and the sorrow for the fallen star; and perhaps there is no passage in the play more essentially pathetic than Artevelde's words at his final parting from Elena:—

> "Unhappy girl,
> The curse of beauty was upon thy birth:—
> Nor love bestowed a blessing."

This is suggestive poetry on which the mind loves to linger sadly and fondly, following up the indications of the poet with fancies sweet and bitter. Elena, it must be remembered, was not dragged down from the fair heights of an honest life by Artevelde, but redeemed from lower depths by her affection for him. The same sound thought, felicitous diction, and variety and truth of character, are to be found in "St. Clement's Eve" as in "Artevelde," modified by the difference of time, place, and circumstance. The impetus of a revolutionary movement accompanied all the action of "Artevelde," in some measure excluding the softer influences of tender and sweet emotion. The tragedy of "St. Clement's Eve" is less dramatic in construction, but it

contains more of ideal poetry and subdues the mind of the reader to a profounder sympathy. The subject of this drama is the suffering of a kingdom which sinks into inanition under the pressure of that inevitable disaster which is involved in the insanity of its monarch. The people, conscious of impending ruin, impute this strange sorrow to the special visitation of God, and turn for relief to the darkest and most lamentable forms of superstition. A deep tragic sadness overshadows every scene; a beautiful sadness without spasm or contortion, without clamour and fury; not wordy, not violent, not excessive. The principal female character, Iolande, is pure and tender, human in her affection and in her calamity. The ill star which hangs over the realm affects her inner life. With a virtuous mind and innocent heart she is made subject to the remorse of a guilty love, and with the noblest aspirations of religious devotion. She falls the victim of fanatical credulity. The lines in which Orleans declares his love to her may be quoted as an example of that musical sweetness in which a tender poetical emotion finds its truest expression.

> "Once in a midnight march—'twas when the war
> With Brittany broke out—tired with the din
> And tumult of the host, I left the road,
> And in the distant cloisters of a wood
> Dismounted and sat down. The untroubled moon
> Kept through the silent skies a cloudless course,
> And kiss'd and hallow'd with her tender light
> Young leaf and mossy trunk, and on the sward
> Black shadows slumber'd, softly counterchanged
> With silver bars. Majestic and serene,
> I said, is Nature's night, and what is man's?
> Then from the secret heart of some recess
> Gush'd the sweet nocturns of that serious bird
> Whose love-note never sleeps. With glad surprise
> Her music thrill'd the bosom of the wood,
> And like an angel's message enter'd mine.
> Why wander back my thoughts to that night march?
> Can you divine? or must I tell you why?
> The world without and world within this precinct
> Are to my heart—the one the hurrying march
> With riot, outrage, ribaldry, and noise
> Insulting night; the other, deep repose
> That listens only to a love-taught song,
> And throbs with gentlest joy."

We might dwell longer on such a theme, but the limits of our space forbid further comment on these plays, and with a backward glance of regret we part from them.

But we have no time to dwell further on these things, for we have not yet mentioned the name of Robert Browning, who takes a very high place in the rank of living poets. He stands apart from fashion, but young students find a wonderful fascination in the intricacies of his style, and in the robust energy of his thought. None but a studious

reader can ever expect to find pleasure from his writing. He is obscure from excessive concentration, and his ideas constrain the words to do their bidding like rebellious slaves rather than lead them as natural subjects. The struggle of infinite aspirations trying to work themselves out with finite instruments, which recurs again and again in Browning's poems under various aspects, seems to have penetrated his mind till it has become embodied in his language. In Browning's slighter poems the peculiarities of style sometimes degenerate into mannerism; in the more serious ones they are recognised as the appropriate product of a marked individual tendency of thought. We find much that is unlike our ordinary experience, but there is generally a reason for it. Browning cannot be accused of being harsh for mere want of skill. The structure of his verse is deliberate and often highly artificial. His Abt Vogler is an extreme instance of complex versification. But he is sometimes perfectly smooth and flowing, as in the Romance in Paracelsus; and he is capable of a simple style, as we find in his incident of the French camp.

It is to be hoped, however, that he will never become the idol of a school of copyists, for his idiosyncrasies would become intolerable affectations in an attempt at reproduction; and, indeed, no imitation of a special manner will ever be fruitful of good. Poets must study poetry, but it must be the poetry of the universe as it is developed in all things, whether in the written records of sublime ideas which the great poems of the world afford, or in the abounding beauty revealed in the works of the Almighty Creator.

UNE MARQUISE.

A RHYMED MONOLOGUE IN THE LOUVRE.

"Belle Marquise, vos beaux yeux me font mourir d'amour."—M. JOURDAIN.

I.

As you sit there at your ease,
O Marquise!
And the men flock round your knees
Thick as bees,
Mute at every word you utter,
Servants to your least frill flutter,
"Belle Marquise!"—
As you sit there growing prouder,
And your ringed hands glance and go,
And your fan's frou-frou sounds louder,
And your "beaux yeux" flash and glow;—
Ah, you used them on the Painter,
As you know,
For the Sieur Larose spoke fainter,
Bowing low,
Thanked Madame and Heaven for mercy
That each sitter was not Circe,—
Or at least he told you so;—
Growing proud, I say, and prouder
To the crowd that come and go,
Dainty Deity of Powder,
Fickle Queen of Fop and Beau,
As you sit where lustres strike you
Sure to please,
Do we love you most or like you,
"Belle Marquise?"

II.

You are fair; O yes, we know it
Well, Marquise;
For he swore it, your last poet,
On his knees;
And he called all heaven to witness
Of his ballad and its fitness,
"Belle Marquise;"—

You were everything in ère,—
With exception of sévère,—
You were belle, cruelle, rebelle,
And the rest of rhymes as well;
You were "Reine," and "Mère d'amour;"
  You were "Vénus à Cythère;"
"Sappho mise en Pompadour,"
  And "Minerve en Parabère;"
You had every grace of heaven
  In your most angelic face,
With the nameless finer leaven
  Lent of blood and courtly race;
And he added, too, in duty
Ninon's wit and Bouffler's beauty;
And La Vallière's "yeux veloutés"
    Followed these;
And you liked it when he said it,—
    On his knees,—
And you kept it, and you read it,
    "Belle Marquise!"

III.

Yet with us your toilet graces
    Fail to please,
And the last of your last faces,
    And your "mise;"
For we hold you just as real,
    "Belle Marquise,"
As your "Bergers" and "Bergères,"
"Iles d'amour," and "Batelières;"
As your "parcs," and your Versailles,
  Gardens, grottoes, and "rocailles;"
As your Naiads and your trees;
  Just as near the old ideal
    Calm and ease,
As the Venus there, by Coustou,—
  That a fan would make quite flighty,—
Is to her the gods were used to,
  Is to grand Greek Aphrodite,
    Sprung from seas.
You are just a porcelain trifle,
    "Belle Marquise,"
Just a thing of puffs and patches,
Made for madrigals and catches,
Not for heart-wounds, but for scratches,
    O Marquise!

Just a pinky porcelain trifle
"Belle Marquise,"
Pâte tendre, rose Dubarry,
Quick at verbal point and parry,
Clever, certes;—but to marry,
No, Marquise!

IV.

For your Cupid, you have clipped him,
Rouged and patched him, nipped and snipped him,
And with chapeau-bras equipped him,
"Belle Marquise,"
Just to arm you through your wife-time,
And the languors of your life-time,
"Belle Marquise,"—
Say,—to trim your toilet tapers,
Or,—to twist your hair in papers,
Or,—to wean you from the vapours;—
As for these,
You are worth the love they give you,
Till a fairer face outlive you,
Or a younger grace shall please;
Till the coming of the crows' feet,
And the backward turn of beaux' feet,
"Belle Marquise,"—
Till your frothed-out life's commotion
Settles down to Ennui's Ocean,
Or a dainty sham devotion,
"Belle Marquise."

V.

No: we neither like nor love you,
"Belle Marquise!"
Lesser lights we place above you,
Milder merits better please.
We have passed from Philosophdom
Into sterner modern days,—
Grown contented in our oafdom,
Giving grace not all the praise;
And, en partant, Arsinoë,—
Without malice whatsoever,—
We shall counsel to our Chloë
To be rather good than clever;
For we find it hard to smother
Just one little thought, Marquise!
Wittier perhaps than any other,—
You were neither Wife nor Mother,
"Belle Marquise!" A. D.

PROGRESS.

"Progress—Bah! Now for a discourse on things in general,—much fuss and little way, like the old lady's journey round the lawn all night." Thus, I can well imagine, half sneers, half snarls, the judicious reader, as his eye falls on the title of this article.

I appreciate his shrewdness. Vast, vague, difficult, intangible, the subject is; and I am modestly conscious of my inability to do it justice. But stronger than this consciousness is my feeling that something to the purpose requires to be said on progress. Is it not precisely on this matter that we are all in a state of uneasy indecision?—all, except perhaps the London tradesman, whose bosom swells with proud satisfaction beneath his red waistcoat, as he imbibes from the inspired columns of Jupiter Junior the persuasion,—delicately, almost insensibly suggested, rather than put in so many words,—that he, representing as he does the infallible "public," is the ultimate judge in all controversies, and stands upon the very apex of civilisation. The question is not by any means so simple as our friend in the red waistcoat is "given to understand." Several of the cleverest and most remarkable men in England take a different view of it from that derived by him from his oracle. They allege that, instead of going forward, or even standing still, we are falling backward. And so the question will recur in a teasing, tantalising form. It is the year of grace 1868; whether we choose or not, we are "in the foremost files of time," and have the advantage of all that has been done in the past; the roar of our machinery, the din of our revolutions, echoes through the solar system; can we not, then, make up our minds whether our progress is a reality and a gain, or a delusion and a mistake? "Never mind," you reply. "Have a slice of sirloin from Mr. M'Combie's ox, pledge me in this superlative sherry, and know that, while Cadiz stretches out her hand to Aberdeen over England's social board, things cannot be in a bad way." Pleasant,—and perhaps wise; but, sooth to say, it is not so easy to be a Gallio in this case. Voracious and bibacious the healthy Englishman is; but it is necessary to his comfort that he retain a fair opinion of himself; and the chances are that, if he tries in society any of those optimist sallies, he will be contemptuously gloomed upon by the smartest people present as a bit of a fool. Will he, nill he, therefore, it is necessary to his peace that he have some precise, intelligent, plain, and tenable notions on the subject of progress. I shall hardly profess to furnish

him with these on the present occasion; but the question has been a good deal in my thoughts, and it may be of some use to him to accompany me in a cursory but not altogether careless survey of the ground.

To begin with, let us have an idea, as distinct as may be, of the dark side of our affairs, and the indictment brought against us by those who mourn and moralise over the decadence of the time. They are indisputably entitled to a hearing. There are not at this moment in Europe two men whose genius is more frankly admitted than that of Mr. Carlyle and Mr. Ruskin. That they are both characterised, more or less, by extravagance and eccentricity, we shall grant; but they have produced works remarkable not more for splendour of diction than for vigour of thought, acuteness of observation, fineness of moral sensibility, and force of moral judgment. They tell us, with constantly deepening emphasis as they increase in years, that the whole system of our affairs,—political, social, moral, intellectual, material,—is in a state of wreck and ruin. More than thirty years ago Mr. Carlyle, abandoning that serene hopefulness and earnest gaiety which lent so rare a charm to his earlier essays, began to talk of "a distracted society, vacant, prurient,"—an age "which slumbers and somnambulates, which cannot speak, but only screech and gibber." For thirty years the river of his indignation and scorn has rolled on in swelling volume; and if those waters of Marah were collected into a single reservoir, it would be larger than could contain all the bitterest wailings and denunciations of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel put together. Mr. Carlyle sees around him "a world all rocking and plunging, like that old Roman one when the measure of its iniquities was full; the abysses, and subterranean and supernal deluges, plainly broken loose; in the wild, dim-lighted chaos all stars of heaven gone out." In Mr. Carlyle's latest deliverance on the condition-of-England question, his far-famed "Shooting of Niagara and After," he reiterates his forebodings, drapes all his shadows in deeper black, and sums up with the announcement that it must, ere long, come to street-fighting, the big English "slave-nation" being taken by the beard by Mr. Carlyle and a company of brave men.

Mr. Ruskin, whose earlier works were in like manner canopied with an atmosphere of calm gladness and steadfast hope, felt at a certain point in his career his spirit so stirred within him by the sins and sorrows he beheld, that he turned from the placid fields of art, rushed into the wilderness of political economy, and, re-appearing in a garment of camel's hair, and with a leathern girdle about his loins, commenced shouting "Woe, woe," into the ears of a generation which had liked him much better in his previous capacity. England, as he now sees her, is a withered and semi-fatuous beldam, "with her right hand casting away the souls of men, and with her left the gifts of God." Few things are more saddening than to read Mr. Ruskin's

latest books; for not only is the melancholy which pervades them profound, but you perpetually feel that it is a brave and radiant soul which has been darkened, and that the murk of night has returned upon the dewdrops of morning. Mr. Carlyle's main cry against us is that we want strength; Mr. Ruskin's, that we want virtue. Mr. Carlyle says we have become a nation of sentimental dreamers, and whining, dawdling incompetents; Mr. Ruskin, that all the motives of our life have been swallowed up in cruel, vulturous, insatiable greed.

Were we to take the suffrage of the poets on this question, they would not yield us a reassuring verdict. Mr. Tennyson has, on the whole, been a cheerful though a deeply thoughtful and earnest poet. In one of his poems, however, the much-canvassed "Maud," he takes formal diagnosis of the time, and never did physician speak less hopefully of a case. "Wretchedest age since time began,"—such is the sum of his opinion. And the younger minstrels,—the Arnolds, Swinburnes, and others, who are seated on the steps of Tennyson's throne,—testify, by the tone of unrest and uneasiness, or even of weariness and disappointment, which can be heard throughout their poems, that, bright and sportive as is their melody at times, they are dimly conscious that the spirit of the age is funereal rather than festive.

In brief, a number of the most gifted and influential men of the day hold that the time is desperately out of joint. In the tumult of what we call our progress they discern the cracking and rending of the timbers in a falling house; our boasted force, they say, is but the heat of fever or the paroxysm of delirium. The blackness of darkness is eclipsing at noon the sun of our national glory, and blight and mildew have struck our standing corn and blooming flowers. Our material prosperity is hollow, precarious, and, such as it is, purchased with an amount of horror, ugliness, choking foulness, which literally blackens the face of nature in our manufacturing districts, and extinguishes at once the colours of the world, and all that is bright and brave and beautiful in man's soul. Our social life is a masked ball of simpering artificialities, skipping, smirking graciosities, of corpses that grin a mere pretence of life and mirth. Our literature is a jargon of histrionic excitements, or a universal crackling of fool's laughter. Our science and our philosophy are mechanical, materialistic. Our religion is a cant, a fanaticism, an imbecility, or a doubt. Our government is a pitiful see-saw of party against party, the work of the country left undone and inefficiency revelling in all departments, while the everlasting problem, whether the sublime Greek or the sublime Trojan —Arcades ambo, humbugs both,—shall mount the throne of office, gets itself solved.

Enough;—such is the "doleful song" chanted by these eminent persons. A great relief it would be to sniff it aside as "a tale of little meaning, though the words are strong." But are there no facts which, contemplated not through the fiery lenses of genius

but with the unimpassioned eyes of common-sense, convey the impression that there is a painful significance in the strain? What imagination, haunted with terror or gangrened by hatred, had dreamed such dreams as were shown by the Trades' Union Commission to be facts? The public stood aghast at the revelation of rattening; it was as if one of the monsters of a former epoch, suddenly uprearing itself from its slime, had appeared in our streets. Was there ever anything in this world more astonishingly and malignantly bad than Fenianism? Put together the incoherence of its aims, the senseless atrocity of its methods, the brainless, heartless fierceness which always characterises it, and you will search history in vain for a ghastlier portent. Poor England, knowing with absolute certainty that to hand over Ireland to the Fenians, with a view to the establishment of a Fenian republic, would be to constitute a hell upon earth, and commit the most stupendous crime in history, has been brought to her wits' end in dealing with these men. If the Fenian leaders had been capable of a relenting emotion,—if one touch of fine or high-toned sentiment could have penetrated the obduracy of their hearts,—they would have been softened by the forbearance and conciliation which reached a climax of thoughtful tenderness in the reprieve of the Irish rebel, Burke. At no other period of the world,—in no other country in our own day, except, perhaps, the United States of America,—would Burke have escaped the gallows. Had the feeling of England towards Ireland been any other save earnest compassion and invincible good-will,—anxiously, resolutely tender, as the spirit of a mother when she hangs over her sick, fractious, wailing, frenzy-stricken child,—that gentleman would have died. With instinct brutish and forlorn, the Fenians could see in mercy only a sign of weakness, and went from worse to worse.

Look, for a moment, at the monetary and commercial world. Convulsions, periodically recurring, shake the great cities of Europe and America,—and, most of all, the metropolis of Great Britain,—as if by the roll of an earthquake. On those occasions the spectacles presented in the "City" suggest to the mind the aspect of a town at whose gates thunder the cannon of a besieging army. Pale and haggard men hurry about in an agony of apprehension. The millionaire of yesterday is the pauper of to-day. The tide of calamity sends its long billows into remote country nooks, licking up the substance of widow and orphan, and hurrying persons brought up to a far different fate into the workhouse or the lunatic asylum. The laws which govern these convulsions are most imperfectly known; but it is universally acknowledged that they are connected with dishonest trading, with over-stimulated competition, with maniacal intensity of desire to become rich. And is it not widely felt that not only commercial soundness, but manufacturing and mechanical efficiency in all provinces, has suffered from this base wish to make

money? The right and noble ambition to produce a good article and have it appreciated has, it is said, yielded to the mean and abnormal ambition to be well paid; and George Eliot's Adam Bede has become an ideal of the past in England. Certainly, when we look at the wretched agglomerations of brick, mud, and wood which are now run up by building speculators on all sides of London, and recall the workmanship of the days when companies of brother masons reared our Gothic cathedrals, whose glory will live for ever, and whose very framework is as adamant, we cannot help entertaining misgivings as to the continuance of the true kingly pride in the breasts of England's workmen.

Shall we break, then, into a shriek of execration and contempt, and declare that the only true prophets are the prophets of despair? Not yet. The source of all error is incomplete induction. There are some facts not touched upon in the preceding paragraphs which a resolutely candid mind will take along with it before pretending to arrive at a conclusion upon the general question.

The first phenomenon of a re-inspiring kind which may strike us as surprising after the panorama of death at which we have been looking, but which is happily indubitable, is the existence of clear, joyous, and successful activity in the department of physical science. Never since the gates of the tomb were shut upon "deep-browed Verulam" did that bark which, to the eye of his imagination, sailed periodically from the New Atlantis on its voyage in quest of light, return so richly freighted with nature's gold and jewels, nature's rifled secrets and hidden powers, as it has returned many times in our day. It is not enough to say that the sciences have grown,—they have shot suddenly from dwarfish into gigantic dimensions. If you glance over that most interesting sketch of the history of geology given by Sir Charles Lyell in his great work, you will be amazed at the childish absurdity of the views touching the structure and modelling of the world and the facts of animal and vegetable life entertained by men of high ability not a hundred years ago. Little more than a quarter of a century has gone by since Lord Macaulay, who, to the last, continued on the side of those who dare to be proud of their country, and hopeful of her future, summed up, in one of his well-packed but freely-moving sentences, the fruits of the Baconian philosophy:—"It has lengthened life; it has mitigated pain; it has extinguished diseases; it has increased the fertility of the soil; it has given new securities to the mariner; it has furnished new arms to the warrior; it has spanned great rivers and estuaries with bridges of form unknown to our fathers; it has guided the thunderbolt innocuously from heaven to earth; it has lighted up the night with the splendour of the day; it has extended the range of the human vision, it has multiplied the power of the human muscles; it has accelerated motion; it has annihilated distance; it has facilitated intercourse,

correspondence, all friendly offices, all despatch of business; it has enabled man to descend to the depths of the sea, to soar into the air, to penetrate securely into the noxious recesses of the earth, to traverse the land in cars which whirl along without horses, and the ocean in ships which run ten knots an hour against the wind." The enumeration had, at the time it was made, that best literary force which comes of moderation and veracity. In its main points it still continues exact and impressive. But how far does it fall short of a just description of what physical science has now achieved! We have seen it revolutionise the whole art and practice of war, military and naval. We have seen it, by subtle dealing with the mysteries of colour and of light, analyse the sun. We have seen it track the tempest on the deep, and commence a series of meteorological inductions which may ultimately rob the storm of its terrors. We have seen it solve the ancient problems of the source of the Nile and the North-West passage. We have seen it not only convey the lightning innocuously into the earth, but lay it beneath the ocean to bear man's messages.

This prosperous and conquering activity of science is a most important fact. It might, not without plausibility, be maintained that it is in itself adequate to the refutation of the school of despair. Intensely earnest as is the activity in question, it is not a fitful or feverish activity. It is calm in its might, like nature's power in early summer, that turns the landscape green. Here, then, is at least one great force which remains sound. Can the body be incurably diseased if one limb is vividly and healthily alive? And can any one say that the powers of this force for good are necessarily incompetent to grapple with our social ills, whatever they may be?

We must tread cautiously here, as in every instance where we have to deal with complex and difficult questions. The scientific activity of the age demonstrates that we are not suffering from the worst of national maladies,—failure of stamina. We are not dying of atrophy. The common statement made with great force and brilliancy by Mr. Matthew Arnold in one of his recent poems, that the civilised world is at this moment in a position analogous to that of the Roman empire in the wane of ancient civilisation, is incorrect. The Roman, "with haggard eyes," gloated over the agonies of gladiators, the combats of wild beasts. The English officer in India takes note of geological formations in his visits to the hills, and gazes with passionate rapture on a new flower. Our children delight in botany and conchology; and our Brewsters, Lyells, Murchisons, testify, by the keen-sparkling interest in their eyes when any accession is made to their store of scientific fact, that the freshness of nature is not exhausted by enjoying it for fourscore years.

On the other hand, it would be rash to conclude that great scientific activity is a pledge that a period of crisis or calamity is not approaching.

Science has never been in a more vivacious state than in France before the revolution of 1793. If ever nation passed through a crisis of agony, the French nation passed through such a crisis in the days of the Terror, and words and ideas must change their significance before we can characterise that period as anything but disastrous. The strength of the French people, however, was not exhausted, and the spasm of national anguish was the prelude to a new and higher development of the national life. In our own time and country we have scientific activity in a superlative degree, without that fierce and embittered antagonism of class to class which was the fatal system in France before the revolution. We may regard it, therefore, as a thing of good omen.

Rattening, and the various exhibitions of proletarian injustice, turbulence, and insubordination which associate themselves in the public mind with rattening, are in themselves as bad as they could well be; but if we steadily consider them in their exact magnitude, and in relation to the circumstances under which they have taken place, they will not strike us into despair. In judging of them, one or two points ought to be distinctly borne in mind.

The practice, though sympathised with by working men to an extent which is sad and alarming, was repudiated by the great body of Trades' Unionists in England. The taint is deadly, but local; and the plague-spot admits of being cut out.

The position of working men, in the second place, in relation to their employers, to each other, and to the public in general, is, in our time, peculiar. It has not yet, so to speak, attained to stable equilibrium. The feudal organisation of labour, of which so warmly coloured and taking a picture has been painted by Mr. Froude in the first volume of his history, was long since broken up. To unite and to organise to the limit of his natural capacity, which will also be the limit of his natural right, is practically a necessity for man. The break-up of the trade organisation of the middle ages was not the obliteration of a principle of human nature, but the abandonment of one form in which that principle had been embodied. Government, however, neither furnished working men with a substitute for the feudal organisation of labour, nor permitted them, for a century or two, to provide by combination a substitute for themselves. Only a few years, comparatively speaking, have elapsed since the right of union was conceded them. It was not likely that they would acquire, in a day or in a year, the capacity to use, beneficially to themselves and to the community, the new and important power which was put into their hands. The self-organisation of labour might well occupy the half, or even the whole, of a century. Errors were sure to be committed by the workmen in the process; and one error clearly inevitable was the exaggeration of the right of the class to lord it over the individual. This error, in its milder but yet pernicious

phase, led to the prohibition of piece-work and the prescription of uniform wages for work of varying quality. This error, in its extreme and atrocious development, was rattening. No energy of repression could be too great in grappling with an error which had brought forth so ghastly a progeny of crime; but there is no reason to doubt that the self-organisation of labour in England will gradually be accomplished in accordance with the laws of justice and expediency.

The population of England, in the third place, has within the last half-century increased in a ratio unprecedented in our history. Gaining new powers by which to draw from the earth its products and utilise them for the benefit of man, we have been able to feed and clothe about three times as many persons as dwelt in England in the earlier part of the century. This was a direct effect, and must therefore constitute an infallible proof, of material prosperity; but the larger a class is, the less ought we to be surprised at the occurrence within it of exceptional instances of insubordination. There has been nothing in the recent proceedings of any portion of the working class so alarming, from the national point of view, as in those of the Rebeccaites and the physical-force Chartists, whose mischievous absurdities have left no dint on England's helm.

The increase of population is, I have said, a token of material prosperity. With more strict scientific accuracy I should call it a sign that food and clothing of one kind or another have been abundant. But it is possible that an increase in mere numbers has been accompanied with, or even occasioned by, a descent on the part of the people in respect to the worthier attributes of humanity, and an accommodation of themselves to lower conditions of existence. Of this kind was doubtless the numerical increase of the Irish during many years preceding the occurrence of the potato blight. Heedless of the future so long as his rudest animal wants were supplied, the Irish peasant thought only of planting and reaping his potato crop; and when the crop failed, his resources were at an end. It is beyond question that the manufacturing and mechanical population of England, among which the increase in numbers has principally, if not exclusively, taken place, have not learned to content themselves with a lower standard of living, but, on the contrary, have steadily raised their conceptions of the comfort, and even the luxury, they ought to enjoy. In some agricultural districts the life of the peasantry, even when all the compensations of their lot are taken into account, is hard. But there are no English counties in our day, as there were in the days of Harrison, where the poor are forced, in times of high prices, to put up with bread made of rye, barley, or a mixture of peas, beans, and oats, "and some acorns among." The experience of the cotton dearth in Lancashire proved that starvation does not tread close upon the heels of scarcity in the England of our time; and a number of phenomena, among which, probably, the most important

is the success of Co-operative Societies, demonstrate that in mental power, self-command, and other qualities which raise a man out of that lowest stratum of humanity on which the demagogue acts most successfully, the workmen of England have made a great advance.

Our spinning-jennies, steam-engines, and blast-furnaces having given us an immense population, it is well for us to recollect that the augmented numbers must be fed. In this connection, the wisdom of our commercial legislation during the last twenty years is conspicuous. Great Britain has been placed in a position of greatest possible advantage relatively to other countries. England is the mart of the world. In our free-trade legislation is embodied a larger and nobler policy than that which Bacon dared to embody in the fundamental statutes on which was reared the legislation of the New Atlantis. Liberal to the measure of romance and extravagance, if tried by the standards of that age, as the administration of Bacon's ideal commonwealth may have been, the principle of exclusion lay deep in its constitution. The legislators of the New Atlantis were desirous to learn from all the world; they were willing also to communicate of their own knowledge to all the world; but they did not venture to hold intercourse with all the world. England has no fund set apart, as the men of the New Atlantis had, for the entertainment of strangers; but she shares with strangers all she has; and her merchants are Greek, Hebrew, German, American. When the harvest of England falls short, every wheat-grower from Suez to Chicago prepares to ship for the English market; we consequently know not the sudden and fierce extremes of famine and of plenty which were familiar to our fathers; and the native stock of the population is recruited by new blood from the most brilliant-witted, patient-thoughted, and tenaciously vital races of the planet.

But if we ought to take the light with the shadow, it is never safe or permissible to forget that shadow goes with the light. Certain of the conditions under which labour is carried on in our manufacturing and mining districts are incompatible with health of body or of soul. All things in this strangely complicated, mysteriously influenced life of ours hold together. Man and his world are adapted to each other; and those beautiful old legends about Æolian harps and sphere melodies were adumbrations of the scientific truth, that man is mysteriously influenced by nature. There is a connection, an actual, literal connection, spiritual and corporeal, between blue sky and cheerfulness of heart, between crimson clouds and generous feelings, between dewy flowers and gracious kindness, between exercise of limb and lung on green or heathy knolls and manly frankness and courage; and between the absence of all these things and sunken degradation of soul. On more than one occasion within the last few years has the general mind of England been struck with horror and amazement at the exhibition, in the mining districts, of a deadness of feeling, a

cowardly self-love, a stolid cruel apathy, as of the idiot or the brute, such as had from of old been deemed impossible in Englishmen. The people of a village,—not one or two, but scores or hundreds of them,—are aware for hours that a man is beating his wife to death, but no one interferes, and the woman is killed. Again, two men pass along the highway while a man is murdering a woman. She shrieks to them for help. They hear her; but they do not stop; and after being fiendishly beaten, she is thrown into a deep hole with water in it, and drowned. In these instances there is a Cainish sordidness and callousness of soul,—"are we our sister's keeper?" "it's not our business," "we should get into trouble if we interfered,"—which one would hope to be beneath the common level of humanity. Those bestial men lived in a sunless atmosphere; from morning to night their feet were upon earth chequered by the play of no sunbeams, freshened by no tender gleam of grass or flowers; when the foot of day touched the mountain-tops, they slunk into the pit, and only when the shadow of the night was creeping over the world did they, like evil things, emerge. Living in the darkness, they became children of darkness; the colours of humanity were blanched out of their souls; and the horrible, corpse-like whiteness of moral death-in-life remained.

Such things there are in our sunny England; but the horror and indignation they excite in the breasts of Englishmen,—the importunate, passionate desire they awaken within us to have them eternally put behind us and improved from the face of the world,—are equally characteristic of our civilisation. The cry of mining and manufacturing England for more light and air has not gone up in vain. The men who, through the industry of the people, have become princes in the land, have responded to it with princely munificence, and our Crossleys, Baxters, and a company of like-minded men with them, have "built themselves an everlasting name" by those splendid donations of parks in the neighbourhood of great cities, in which the worker may brace his weary limbs, inhale pure air, and glad his eyes with the light of flowers.

There is a reserve of force amongst us capable of bearing upon our social ills, of which our despairing censors fail to take due account. So fixedly do they gaze into the black pool of our miseries and crimes, that they mark not the silent, pauseless, mighty enginery by which the sun above their heads is slowly but surely drawing it up. Our woe and wickedness we share with other ages; that spirit of kindness which is so potent in these days we may call our own. The Parliament of England passing a special act by which a man who had committed a heinous and dangerous crime was boiled alive; Cranmer lightly stating in the corner of a letter, as a little bit of news which might as well be mentioned, that he had left a man to go to the fire for heresy; these at least are phenomena which have become im-

possible in England. We cannot even conceive the hardness and cruelty of the olden time; and there are tens of thousands in all quarters with whom it is a necessity of existence, a necessity without the satisfaction of which the pain of living would be intolerable, to do what they can to mitigate the evils which surround them.

Consider how much there is in that one word, sympathy, viewed as descriptive of a characteristic of our time in contrast with other ages. Is not sympathy almost entirely a child of these last days, and is there any quality, any influence, short of the special inspiration of the Divine Spirit, more blessed than sympathy? "O sympathy!" one could almost exclaim with a living writer, "thou of the gentle tread, and the tender hand, and the kind, thought-lighted brow, methinks, if I could envy the poet his lyre, it would be to chant thy praises! Thou art the angel of mercy, that openest the eyes, and tunest the tongue, and, with thy silent, delicate ministry, healest the heart. Thou revealest secrets, and makest the face of a brother the mirror in which a man may see his own. Thou art the central chord around which the music of humanity ranges itself. All discords thou reducest to harmony. The stone falls from the hand, the dark, knitted brow smooths down, as the Saviour's appeal,—'He that is without sin among you?'—is conducted by thee to the heart. Thou touchest the face of the bigot, and its hard, harsh lines melt and glow in the light of merciful intelligence. There is not a woe thou canst not alleviate; not a joy thou canst not augment; not a perception thou canst not clear; not a faculty thou canst not invigorate; not a good quality thou canst not temper and ennoble: thou fillest the well-springs of life. Loosed by thy delicate finger, the bandage falls from the eye of Justice, and though that eye may glisten with a tear, she sees by it how to hold the balances and to adjust the scales infinitely better than when she was blind. Thou art the woman in the household of the soul, helpmate to the intellect, ally and guardian of all that is good." This is perhaps rather high-flown and prose-poetical, but at bottom it is not inconsistent with fact; and I do not think it would be easy to exaggerate the advantage which the present possesses over bygone ages in respect of sympathy. Stern and cold as the typical character of the English is understood to be, there must be in it a vein of the finest sympathetic tenderness, homely yet delicate, simple, beautiful, and true. England has produced no Raphael or Titian; but what European artist has painted a child like Reynolds, or a lady like Gainsborough? It is difficult to imagine that the gentleness which has increased in all civilised countries in recent times, and conspicuously increased in England, is not a real advance upon the hardness of our ancestors. That enthusiasm of humanity, that passion for well-doing, that modern chivalry, with the ministering hand for the levelled spear and the dew of sympathy for the lightnings of defiance, which now carries on a universal crusade against

suffering and wrong, may be trusted to do somewhat to better the lot of mankind.

One thing clearly indisputable is, that we occupy a position of unprecedented advantage in respect of machinery accumulated and knowledge obtained. With our mechanical, chemical, agricultural science, we can make more of this "neat little farm, the earth," than was practicable for any former generation. We have surveyed the patrimonial acres, and know what they will bear. From Erebus to Hecla, nothing has escaped us. Aided by our Cuviers, our Humboldts, our Lyells, we can fix with something like precision the number of men that can be maintained upon the planet. A reasonable computation is that, if the habitable earth were utilised to the extent to which modern science renders it utilisable, it could support twelve times its present number of human tenants. The army of mankind has but begun, for example, to take possession of its domain in the western hemisphere, north and south. Millions on millions of wheat-bearing, beef-bearing, wool-bearing acres in North and South America have to be rescued from the bison and the jaguar, the ape, the puma, and the snake. Escaped from the camp of the human host, announcing its approach, myriads of wild horses, wild cattle, wild dogs, roam the prairie and the pampa, to be shut in, one day, by the mountain and the ocean, and brought back into subjection. If the human being is becoming superfluous in Europe, in other lands he is still at a premium; and by bold enterprise and wise organisation, it is surely possible that he may be brought where he is wanted. If you consider man well, you will find that what is of all things most conducive to his health and prosperity is action; and it is too soon to speak hopelessly of human progress while the planet presents fields for exertion practically illimitable.

All ages are ages of transition; for man is essentially the child of progress, and from the days of flint hatchets to those of electric telegraphs has been going on; but of the present time we may say, with special emphasis, that it is characterised by transition. A recluse here and there, who, contriving to anchor his boat in some quiet creek apart from the main current of tendency, has dozed while the mighty stream was hurrying on; a man of action, absorbed in practical enterprises, and unable to realise the velocity of the tide which has swept himself and all else along with it; these may dream that it is with us as it was, say, three centuries ago, when society took its modern form after the great religious revolution which broke up feudalism in the west of Europe. But surely this is a mistake. Except in the very roots of his moral and intellectual being, man is changed. His,—the civilised, the educated man's,—conception of the universe around him is so entirely different from that which was formerly entertained, that a modification of the whole structure and framework of his thought has become inevitable. His little dwelling,

with its day-lamp, the sun, and its night-lamp, the moon, and its star-openings in the pavement of heaven, has expanded into the infinite blue of immensity. His few thousand years of human life and terrestrial geography have deepened back into the dateless ages of geology. Mainly through the influence, direct or indirect, of scientific pursuits, inquiry in all departments,—historical, critical, philosophic,——has become at once more searching and more definite than heretofore. The whole intellectual atmosphere has been clearing up. Vague wonder, vague fear, vague expectation, have been passing away, and while the grandeur and mystery of nature have been heightened and deepened, the fantastic splendours and superstitious terrors with which she was formerly invested have been vanishing away. Huge cataclysms, worlds seething between fierce heat of internal fire and canopy of steaming vapour, have given place to a calmer idea of the process of creation, and the present is seen stretching, in variety of phenomena, but sublime unity of law, into the vistas of the past. Imagination is sternly denied the legendary and fanciful materials out of which she used to delight to rear her dream-fabrics, but in exchange for the fleeting illusions of intellectual childhood she receives the fadeless magnificence of truth. Astrology, with its pompous jargon, is no more, but in its stead we have the unveiling of heaven, in vision after vision of ineffable glory, by astronomy; no alchemist or magician now arranges his retorts or gathers his simples with a view to converting lead into gold, or discovering the elixir of life; but the chemist tells us of the secret powers and properties of nature, and the geologist points us to the rocks of the earth in which lie veins of gold. Even spirit-rapping apes the language of science, and claims, not in vain, for imbecility and imposture, that candid investigation which, in good time, snuffs them out.

Change of this kind, pervading every province of intellectual exertion, is no mere restless vacillation. Let the cynic say that we are being made like a wheel;—it is a wheel which is not merely revolving on its pivot, but going forward. That there is in the present time much of that "raw haste" which is "half-sister to delay," may be true, but there is hardly more than enough to balance that ill-starred union of torpor and timidity which calls itself wisdom and conservatism, and is the dry-rot of civilisation.

Of our political position and prospects, also, shall I venture to speak a hopeful word? Fenianism, mob-processioning, sacrifice, or apparent sacrifice, of political consistency, if not for the sake of office, at least for the sake of getting over a difficulty, are ugly phenomena. But is it not possible that Fenianism, as it is the worst and most absurd of the political agitations which have desolated Ireland, may prove one of the last? Its rabid excesses during the last eighteen months have clearly been connected with the conclusion of the American war, and the consequent disengagement, to the

annoyance and detriment of the British nation, of a number of the most reckless scoundrels and most vehement blockheads of the species. Except as part of that venomous disaffection, that blind and furious exasperation, which in all European countries constitutes a fire-stratum, happily very thin, but requiring to be constantly watched, beneath the surface of our civilisation, Fenianism has probably all but played itself out.

As for the political morality of a Tory Government passing a Reform Bill founded on household rating suffrage, we are too near the event, with its startling vicissitude and its passionate strife, to hold the balance straight in weighing the motives of the actors. The mere fact, however, that the vindication of the Government, if practicable, must depend upon complicated and difficult reasonings, with nice consideration of times and circumstances, and ample allowance for human frailty and the requirements of expediency, is to be regretted. If the history of a political party can pledge it to anything whatever, the Conservative party in England was pledged to resist, if proposed by others, and still more to decline bringing forward on its own account, a Reform Bill embracing a large extension of the suffrage. It has a sophisticating effect upon the public mind, an effect alien to the simplicity and decision which ought to rule the moral impulses of a nation, when the conduct of statesmen requires to be elaborately vindicated. It is an unquestionable fact, weep over it or smile over it as we may, that the temper of Parliament is not favourable to a high sense of honour and a keen and sensitive conscientiousness. It was remarked that when Macaulay, always conscious of making history, talked of elevated sentiments and the loftiest political virtue, his fellow-members used to have a faint, underhand suspicion, owing to the depravity of their hearts, that there was in him a trace of the pedant and the prig; and the jesting, gyrating, easy-minded Palmerston, or the rollicking Disraeli, is far more readily obeyed in St. Stephen's than the scrupulous, proud, and irascible Gladstone. More consoling is it to recollect that in Mr. Lowe, Lord Cranborne, and one or two others, the country beheld, during the Reform session, and appreciated, an unswerving and intrepid consistency. It will, I think, be admitted also by any one who has been a careful observer during the last twenty years, that the character of parliamentary eloquence has, on the whole, changed for the better. The flashy, rhetorical ingredients have been more and more thrown out. Dishonest commonplaces about the patriotism and intelligence of working men became rarer in proportion as a just regard to their claims, and an unaffected desire to give them a voice in the national affairs, were exhibited. Not only in the great speeches of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Lowe, but in careful efforts by much younger politicians,—Mr. Grant Duff, for example, and Lord Cranborne,—you have a selectness of language, a compact

vigour of thought, a comprehensiveness and accuracy of information, such as politicians used to reserve for the articles they contributed to Reviews, and which are new in the parliamentary eloquence of the century.

Better still, in the way of political augury, is the rise, both within and without the walls of St. Stephen's, of a spirit of earnest practical endeavour, disposed to attach comparatively slight importance to party cries and party names, and to concentrate attention and effort upon administrative efficiency. It is still in general admitted, though one or two bold thinkers have ventured, on grounds which appear to me satisfactory, to dispute the proposition, that party government is inseparable from the working of parliamentary institutions; but it is felt by sensible men that the question whether a politician calls himself Whig, Tory, or Radical, is of less importance, as bearing upon his fitness or unfitness to occupy a place in the Government, than the question whether he is specially qualified to do some part of the nation's work, to govern India, to conduct our foreign relations, to offer a definite and judicious suggestion respecting Ireland. No doubt the ideas which prevail as to what Parliament is able to perform, and ought to perform, are vague in the extreme; but I am much mistaken if there has not been gradually deepening and intensifying in the mind of the nation a feeling that the time has come for Parliament to enter upon an industrial era. The essentially important but long and wearisome problem of rendering Parliament indisputably the voice of the nation,—the tongue whereby the British people signifies its will,—has been solved. Adjustments, more or less important, remain to be made, in connection with the general constituency; and if the national honesty, earnestness, and common-sense were all that could be wished, our legislators would think it worth while to put an end, by one strenuous effort, to electoral corruption. But, in the most debateable and laborious part of it, reform of the parliamentary machine has been got done with, and the wiser portion of the nation lifts up its head to see what work the said machine is capable of turning out. It is shrewdly suspected,—shrewdly, and I think rather sternly too,—that our colonies lack governing, and that the relation in which they stand to the mother country is preposterous; that our railways, put by Parliament in possession of stupendous powers, are not under adequate parliamentary supervision; that jobbery and the attorney interest run riot in parliamentary committees, and require bridling a good deal. Not one of those superfluous railway lines which plough up the soil of England like lashes on the back of a slave, interfering with agriculture and entailing endless distress upon shareholders, but was sanctioned by a parliamentary committee, and helped to round the paunch of many a parliamentary lawyer. If you will reflect upon the numbers of our home population, and cast a

glance over the territories on the map of the world which, with their teeming millions, own the sway of Britain, you will see that Providence has appointed for this nation not a little to do. Parliament, the elixir of the national talent and the national worth, ought to be the model and the fountain-head of all our activities, simplifying, abbreviating, and, when indispensable, supplementing our code of laws, searching out capable governors for our dependencies, superintending the execution of works of national importance which require the interposition of the national will and the national force, reducing taxation to the lowest point consistent with efficient administration and public security, disencumbering itself of all work not its own,—that is to say, of all work which naturally and normally belongs either to the individual or to associated individuals,—vigilantly repressing injustice exercised by one class upon another, and impartially securing the benefits of the constitution for all classes. Such would be the Parliament of England in its industrial era; and the spirit which animates our younger politicians is of a kind which renders the expectation of its being realised not altogether visionary.

It would be easy to write a volume on the characteristics of English literature at this moment; it is difficult to speak a few words upon the subject which will be felt to be pertinent. At a first glance one might infer that our literature is fast running to seed. Beyond all question an enormous and alarming amount of trash is in these days put into black and white in England. The natural arrangement that a complete blockhead should be quiet and not write, which seems to have been understood by our ancestors, has been totally set aside, and every booby now sports his book. Nature, it is true, asserts herself by keeping those books unread. They probably give pleasure to their producers. Accurate observers in natural history are aware that the donkey brays his loudest, not for the purpose of communicating his ideas to other donkeys, but purely with a view to making proclamation of himself, and being conscious of raising a noise. His trumpet will resound through a whole parish when he has neither quadruped nor biped in sight; and the discordant scream appears to indicate a sort of absurd crack-winded satisfaction. A similar instinct it perhaps is which instigates the corresponding human animal to proclaim himself in a book. As publishers are generally wise enough in their generation to take care that no one suffers pecuniarily for the blockhead's book except the sole man who enjoys it, there is little practical evil done, and waste paper is a useful commodity. A more dangerous symptom is the rapid decline in the quality of our wit and humour, with enormous increase in the quantity of what passes itself off as such. For my own part, I advisedly declare that nothing previously witnessed in the way of drivel seems to me to have quite come down to the level of the contributions made by the imitators of Artemus Ward to the funny

papers. There have been traces, too, of a grossness of political slander which prove that we have still among us one or two satirists of that order which has been justly said to furnish a link of connection between man and the baboon. Not more disputable is it that a large proportion of the fictitious literature of the day is mere unwholesome garbage, ministering to an appetite for morbid excitement, conveying neither instruction nor information, deadening the interest of every-day life, inflaming and contaminating the imagination, and injuring every quality of character, every capacity of intellect.

And yet I see no reason to despair of British literature. There is much jungle in the forest, but it does not kill the trees; there are many weeds in the garden, but they do not choke the flowers. A genuine vitality, an honest, unaffected force in many departments of our literature, speaks of growth, not of decadence. In historical investigation we push on with the ardour and the vigilance which all earnest minds have caught from the scientific tendency of the age. The judgments of former times have been revised; pretences and falsehoods have been exploded; we have learned the salutary, though startling, lesson that at least nine-tenths of what has passed with us for historical knowledge has been elaborate and pompous ignorance; and the way is being gradually but steadily cleared towards an approximately correct conception of the characters and the events of past times. From Hallam's "History of the British Constitution," on the one hand, taken as a model of temperate, exact, impartial writing, to Mr. Carlyle's "History of the French Revolution," on the other, viewed as an illustration of the power of genius, allied with intense and wide-ranging human sympathy, to call the men and women of the past to life around us, and show us the web of history as it is woven by their hands, how many admirable historical works and historical essays we have had within the last quarter of a century! In poetry there is not much that is extensively read, but the cause is rather that our great poets have taught us to be fastidious than that much excellent poetry is not produced. Our minor poets alone would have sufficed to make any epoch remarkable which did not possess Tennyson and the Brownings. No female poet has appeared in the world who is, on the whole, comparable with Mrs. Barrett Browning. In Tennyson's poetry we may take a legitimate pride; for it is the poetry of consummate culture, the most finished the world has seen, glorious in melody, and yet profoundly English. And if a large proportion of our fiction is rubbish, let it be said that the generation which saw for twenty years, contemporaries in fame and rivals in power, three such novelists as Thackeray, Dickens, and Lord Lytton, cannot have much to complain of in its fictitious literature. "The Newcomes" and "David Copperfield" will certainly be named among the finest examples of this species of composition in the English language, and

the line of female novelists in England is carried on by a lady who, in "Adam Bede," in "Silas Marner," in "Romola," has shown herself, to say the least, a worthy successor of Jane Austen and Charlotte Bronte. In general literature I shall name only Mr. Ruskin, confessedly the first Art critic in Europe, who, if he had written between Hooker and Jeremy Taylor, and his works had come down to us alongside of theirs, would, I think, be allowed to have surpassed both in the combination of grandeur with melodiousness, and to be, on the whole, the greatest master of English prose that has yet appeared. The age is probably richer than most ages in genius, and whatever genius there is can now make itself heard. That base and pernicious literature abounds is certain, but men of taste are apt to confound with what is actually bad what may be innocuous in itself, and, relatively to certain stages of culture, positively excellent. Because you can critically appreciate Beethoven's sonatas, you need not cast looks of scorn upon the circle of village children drinking in ecstasy from the tones of a barrel-organ.

One word more,—as gentlemen say on platforms,—and I have done. Fain would I make it a word worth uttering, for its subject is the most important upon which I have yet touched. Religion, which, along with the progressive reason, gives man his distinctive position among the creatures of this world, is the most momentous fact to be considered in judging of any state of society. The history of mankind furnishes no example of a healthful or prosperous society in which religion had fallen into abeyance. The assertion is loudly and extensively made that religion has either fallen, or is rapidly falling, into abeyance in England at this hour. Intelligent men, it is alleged, whether philosophers or artisans, smile at the claims of Christianity; in continental society the emancipation of all, save women and children, from sacerdotal thraldom is complete; and in England the separation between that part of the community which is under clerical influence and that which indignantly casts it off becomes unmistakable. A Saturday Reviewer has given expression, in the following remarkable statement, to his idea of the extent to which the separation in question has already been carried:—"There is a gulf between the clerical mind and the ordinary male mind which is deep, and daily deepening. On the one side it is a pity akin to contempt, too apathetic to form itself into words; on the other, there are pious hands uplifted in meek spitefulness." We have seen what Mr. Carlyle and others say as to our religion being either a doubt, a cant, or an hypocrisy.

Let us be calm. Within the circle of a coterie one is apt to misconceive what is being done or thought in the great world. When Archdeacon Denison and a few sympathising friends come together to express their sense of the horror and iniquity of the Conscience Clause, they find their unanimity so complete, their sentiment so harmonious,

their unconsciousness of any fault or flaw in their formula so profound, that their senses are steeped in a sweet entrancing music of forgetfulness; the panorama of the present swims from before their eyes; and they fancy that they live in the merry ecclesiastical England of 1662, the ink hardly dry on the Act of Uniformity. That is a mistake; and when the zealous archdeacon goes out into the world of present things, even so far as to a Church Congress, he hears what, to use his own words, "takes his breath away." But a corresponding mistake is just as often made in the scientific or philosophical coterie. The few who are gathered together, and who speak a dialect of their own, take it for granted,—there is a pleasant sensation in so doing which facilitates the operation,—that they represent the general body of their countrymen, and, in particular, that they are accepted as guides by the overwhelming majority of intelligent and educated men. This, however, may be a delusion, and I cannot help thinking that the Saturday Reviewer mistook the impression of a coterie for a sign of the times when he said that "the ordinary male mind" of England regards the clergy with contemptuous and apathetic pity. At all events, his words have no scientific value as a statement of fact. A vast proportion of the landowners, of the merchants, of the farmers, of the tradesmen, of the working men of England, look upon the clergy with respect. They do so not without cause, for the clergy deserve to be respected. I do not name one or ten, because if I named any it would be invidious not to name hundreds, among the clergy of all denominations in England, who, if honest adherence to conviction, blameless character, benevolent life, personal refinement, and a high standard of intellectual attainment, constitute a title to respect, deserve to be respected. Between the learned professions there is naturally some jealousy. The lawyer type of mind, on the whole far lower and ignobler, is more acute than that of the clergyman, more inclined to religious scepticism, more heartless, cold, and cynical. Young lawyers are apt enough to speak and feel with contempt regarding the clergy. Medical men, too, are not unfrequently glad of an occasion "to spite the parsons." The literary and the clerical classes compete in all modern countries for the direction of public opinion; rivalry produces in mean souls,—and even men of letters can be mean,—envy and hatred; and envy and hatred are most pleasantly expressed in contempt. Scientific men have reason for accusing at least a portion of the clergy of discountenancing science, and materialists and positivists see their natural enemies in a class which stands or falls with the subsistence of faith in a spiritual world and a living God. That it is possible, therefore, to move pretty widely in cultivated circles in the metropolis without passing beyond limits within which the clergy are despised, I admit; but it is simply an error to conclude that ordinary Englishmen regard the clergy, or the Christian religion which they teach,

with contempt. Mr. Gladstone may be considered a favourable specimen of the ordinary, or even of the extraordinary "male mind" of England, and his critique on "Ecce Homo" is not the work of a man who turns in apathetic scorn from all that the clergy of England are and represent.

The lay mind of the country, let enthusiastic sceptics say what they will, has not learned to look upon the historical facts with which the Christian religion is bound up, as Cicero and Cæsar looked upon the tattle of the augurs; but it is, I think, absolutely certain that the lay mind of England will accept those truths respecting the physical world upon which scientific authorities are agreed, and those conclusions respecting the documents in which the Christian religion is embodied on which scholars are unanimous. It is absolutely certain, also, that these scientific truths and philological conclusions differ in important points from the conceptions entertained regarding them by the divines and scholars who drew up the confessions of the various Protestant Churches. Englishmen feel themselves bound, not merely by their national character for integrity, frankness, and courage, but by their Protestantism itself, to face every statement which is true, and to face it with a welcoming smile. That clearing process which has been applied to all our knowledge must be applied to our religion. It must divest itself of every tag of superstition; and it will, we may pretty confidently infer, be in the future less ecclesiastical and less dogmatic than it has been in the past. But there is no reason to apprehend that we are passing into the Chinese phase of civilisation, or that the grandeur which envelopes human affairs when heaven's light falls upon them is to be no more seen in England. Christianity, the most spiritual of religions, presents no parallel to the religions of classic antiquity; it affords scope to all that is noble, great, beautiful in man; it is the religion of conscience and of the affections; its harmony with what is divine in humanity is so profound, that the circumstance has been taken advantage of to represent it as a mere elaboration of natural religion. The deliberate testimony of the wisest of the moderns, Goethe, was given to the effect that man cannot recede from the point to which he has attained in Christianity. That a religion which, in its body of spiritual truth, offers a comprehensive and benign response to all that is deepest in human nature, under what theory soever man is viewed, should be undermined by the discovery of new facts relating either to the formation of the world or man's place in the animal creation, is out of the question; and the historical evidence touching the fundamental facts of the Christian revelation stands at this moment on a basis which scholars taking rank with any in Europe hold to be impregnable. P. B.

ON MATRIMONY.

My Dears,—I am an old maid; I will not disguise the fact, although I am not one of those enraged old maids who pretend to glory in their triumphant escape from the ignoble slavery of wedlock. Without any intention of wearying you with querulous lamentations on my own account, I confess once for all that I believe double is better than single blessedness; and that if I had practised in my youth the wisdom I am about to preach in my old age, I might have been happier as a wife than as a spinster, and should perhaps have addressed you young people with more authority in the character of grandmother, than in that of great-aunt. But as happiness is undemonstrative, and poets "learn in suffering what they teach in song;" as the bankrupt trader ripens, by the frost of his discontent, into a political economist, while the merchant prince has no temptation to divulge the simple secret of his wealth; as the mariner who sails into the haven with all his cargo sound and dry, enriches the admiralty charts with no new coral-reef; it is left for those who in their own lives have been unlucky, to brood over the causes of failure and point out to others the avenues of success.

When I class myself with the unlucky, I do not mean to reproach fortune as being niggardly with her gifts, but to regret my own want of discretion in the application of the advantages which fortune bestowed on me with more liberality than I deserved. I was neither ill born, plain, portionless, nor stupid. It was my own fault that my abilities were devoted rather to the display of my own cleverness than the acquisition of other people's knowledge; and that I calculated on my social position and worldly wealth as stepping-stones to a higher level than they practically availed to reach. The judicious reader will believe as much, or as little, as he or she pleases of an old lady's report of her own long-faded charms; but I believe it was from some fault in my disposition rather than in my outward woman, that I was considered rather striking and graceful at first sight than attractive on further acquaintance.

I do not believe that I was incapable of loving, though I was once told so, more in sorrow than in anger, by one of my admirers to whom I certainly behaved very ill. He was then a barrister, scarcely advanced enough in his profession to be called a rising barrister, but already known to be a man likely to rise; a man of solid and vigorous ability, of determined industry—square-headed, square-shouldered, deep-eyed and deep-chested. I had a certain respect for

his character and liked him. Unfortunately, though he was rather above the middle height, his large head and shoulders and large hands and feet prevented him from looking like a hero of romance. I liked him, not wisely because of his own merits, but foolishly because one of his few weaknesses was a great admiration of myself. His conversation was shrewd, pithy, and sometimes had a homely terse eloquence when he was roused and spoke with feeling. There was a mica sparkle of humour in this solid granite man, but he was not brilliant or witty, as he professed to think me. Indeed he talked to me less than I talked to him, and it was pleasant to talk to him. Besides, as everybody said he was so sensible, and as my father, who was chairman of quarter sessions, said he had a "judicial mind," his admiration flattered me. I am not going to relate the circumstances of that prosaic and commonplace story. After a certain number of circuits and assize balls,—he did not dance well and had better not have danced at all,—he said he had laid sufficient hold on the skirts of the law to venture. In short, he asked me to be his wife, and I would not take him. There was a certain honourable captain in the Guards who had lately come down to stand for our nearest borough,—a very ornamental, fashionable and accomplished captain, who paid a certain amount of attention to me while he wanted my father's influence in the borough. Perhaps he was in earnest till he found that my fortune was only ten thousand pounds and my father's estate entailed on my cousin Richard. I could tell you a pretty history about the captain, if my object were to amuse you instead of instructing you. I would have married the captain if he had asked me, as I expected he would in the flush of triumph after we had helped him to win his contest. How beautifully he spoke, how gracefully he interspersed his serious oratory with ready badinage and repartee when the mob interrupted him! I thought he would make such a figure in Parliament, and he looked so much like a hero of romance! But he came to no good, gambled, and ran away with somebody else's wife, and drank, and died abroad in debt and dishonour. And I was only waiting for him to ask me, when I refused that honest and manly heart which was mine! After all, when I look back upon it, I went nearer loving the rough lawyer, than the smooth soldier. And how sorry I was for him! I am sorry for myself now. He is a judge and a peer of the realm. I wonder if he ever reads magazine articles. I am too old and wrinkled to blush at the thought of his reading this public avowal of my regret. It is not for him or any other good judges I write, but to caution young ladies against the errors of average young ladyhood. If you wish to get a husband, my dear, and one who will really suit you, do not set up a false ideal of yourself, for an idol of idiotic adoration, and then evolve from your inner consciousness, or from the descriptions of female novelists, an impossible hero, who shall sympathise with all your vanities and merge all your vexations of spirit

in a vortex of inconceivable rapture; but set yourself betimes to study mankind, and to educate your mind by frank and honest communication with the fellow-creatures providence sends in your way.

A young lady has much to learn, of which she comes out of the schoolroom quite ignorant, and which she cannot pick up in the library. She has not many years to learn it in, before she ceases to be a young lady. But though she must lose no time, the beginning of her wisdom is to learn that the greatest of all waste of time is hurry. Impatience is the robber of time, whereas procrastination, as we know by the copy-books, is a mild and gentle thing, whose petty larcenies are accompanied by no violence. Impatience is always rushing headlong into tangled and thorny thickets to explore some promising and picturesque short cut to nowhere. Impatience is always on the point of finding a fool's paradise in a mare's nest. Impatience goes on, from failure to failure, attempting to make silk purses out of sows' ears. Impatience keeps tossing over new acquaintances in a perpetually disappointed rapture of anticipation of ideal perfection;—like some insane bee buzzing about in search of a flower which should be entirely constructed of white wax and clarified honey.

A girl who comes out at seventeen, let her be ever so highly gifted by nature, or ever so highly finished by her governesses, must necessarily be profoundly ignorant of men and of the things which interest the minds of men,—especially of those men who are of an age at which the average male population begin to think of marrying. She will be unwise if she dedicates herself to exceptional rather than to ordinary instances of mankind. There are, no doubt, a certain number of heirs-apparent of rich men, who might marry young if they happened to fall very much in love, which is seldom the case, but who usually lead a vagrant and miscellaneous life of flirtation for some years, and eventually marry an heiress, or a beauty, or a duke's daughter;—somebody, that is, as exceptional as themselves.

If you are, as I believe, merely a nice young lady, with a nice figure, expressive eyes, plenty of hair on your head,—and I hope you dress it simply and neatly, without fuzzy wisps of horsehair or disingenuous chignons, or a nasty trailing ringlet down your nape, all which will tell against your success with the better samples of marrying men,—why should you augur to yourself any very special or exceptional good luck in the matrimonial chances of life, if you are foolish enough to consider it good luck to link your destiny in life with a young man chosen with a view to prospective thousands a year, or acres in a ring-fence, and who will very likely be tired of you before he comes into possession?

But if you seriously and betimes devote yourself to the study proper to womankind, and pursue it with good sense and modesty you will have the same fair average certainty of success which a

guaranteed by the world's experience to any honest, sensible, and industrious man, in any honourable calling which he adopts.

And now we come to the question, "What is the study proper to womankind?" I am not prepared to take what is called high ground. I have said I consider double blessedness better than single; but blessedness of any sort is better than the double wretchedness of being the companion for life of a man who is unsuitable to you, or to whom you are unsuitable. Your proper study is to make yourself the best possible wife for your best possible husband, by educating your soul and mind and body to the best of your abilities. If you have not the good fortune to find a man whom you can love, respect, comfort, and be useful to, you will, at the worst, have put yourself in the way of being a more amiable, respectable, and comfortable old maid than you would be if you neglected so to educate yourself.

There are two main and typical methods in which "Cœlebs' wives set out in quest of lovers," which differ, toto cœlo, as well as toto cœlebi. The first method, the one to avoid, is the way to catch a fool;—and, failing that happy result, to be a superannuated flirt, than which there is, probably, no more miserable and contemptible position on the face of the earth. It is done by concealing your ignorance instead of replacing it by knowledge; by arraying yourself in the smiles of flattery and the languishing airs and graces of a susceptibility too ready and too general to be quite modest; and by playing over and over again to a succession of heroes silly enough to play the fool with you, the stale and weary part of the jeune ingenue, with gushing emotions and impulsive affections. The disadvantage of this performance is, that it is only pretty and interesting once in a lifetime,—and that once at a rather tender age. It degenerates by repetition. Your Juliet is a poor part for a long run on the boards of real life. All the world cannot be your Romeo at once, and only fools, or worse, will consent to be Romeos by rotation. It educates you to nothing;—if it does not degrade you to something worse than nothing. It sinks you slowly in your own esteem, and very rapidly in everybody else's. It creates in you a morbid want of admiration from the other sex, which, as it ebbs away from you, you will be tempted to lay yourself out for with less and less of maiden reserve; or, not to mince the matter, with more and more of brazen effrontery. In short, this is the way not to do it.

And now for the way to do it. The secret is very simple, but its application is as wide as truth. You must as much as in you lies strive to suppress your natural desire of making yourself an object of interest to others, and overlay this propensity with the faculty and the habit of taking a real interest in the thoughts and characters and experiences of your fellow-creatures. Egotism is the great canker of humanity; and its blight is more fatal to the blossom than the fruit, because it nips so many human characters in the bud that never come to any fruit worth mentioning at all. If you master this great

incubus of self early in life, you will walk through life like an unburdened free man, with a straight back and unembarrassed hands among troops of bondsmen bent double under heavy packs. I am not preaching Christianity, but worldly wisdom. You will win love wholesale from man, woman, and child by lending a willing hand's turn when occasion offers to help them with their bundles, which they will confide to you all the more readily when they find you are not in the habit of troubling them with yours in return.

There is something to learn from every human being with whom you come in contact. Make it your study to find what special knowledge, what generous sentiment, what noble aspiration there may be in the next person with whom you become acquainted. Tolerate this person's faults, repress your impulse to obstruct his egotism by the display of your own abilities; pass by opinions you could vigorously and perhaps successfully combat; wait till you can respond to something with which you cordially sympathise. Many a character which seems unsympathetic and unpromising at first, thaws in the absence of opposition, and in the presence of sympathy. I am not recommending a hypocritical pretence of interest in really uninteresting persons, nor a cowardly dissimulation of your opinions when your opinions are really called for. I am trying to impress upon you the great worldly value of that sovereign grace of charity which "hopeth all things, thinketh no evil, vaunteth not itself." When you have succeeded in a few crucial experiments of extracting useful knowledge and human interest out of persons whom, without this effort, you might have voted dull and disagreeable, you will find how much an analogous method of treatment will enhance the pleasure you derive from those whom, without any effort of self-suppression at all, you would have found clever and agreeable.

Let us suppose you are seated at a dinner-party next to a man who, without being deficient in such lively small talk as will keep an average commonplace young lady in pretty brisk conversation, you know to be of good capacity and well informed. The conversation glances on some topic of serious interest, on which you feel yourself to be so ignorant that you cannot venture to discuss it on equal terms without a moral certainty of floundering out of your depth. There are three courses for you to pursue. If you are absolutely foolish, you will express some borrowed opinion, some crude formula of commonplace and stale wisdom, the best you have in your limited armoury, in opposition to the view hinted at, and allow yourself to be drawn into a pert, superficial mock argument, in which your neighbour may amuse himself by drawing out your self-sufficient imbecility to the utmost;—after which you will neither of you like one another the better. If you are half wise, you will slip out of the danger by some not too violent piece of colloquial legerdemain, giving the go-by to the topic. But if you are really wise, you will take the

opportunity of putting a modest and intelligent question, which will show that you are neither too vain nor too stupid to desire to learn. Do not be afraid of being troublesome. No capable and instructed man finds it wearisome to communicate facts or theories which he has at the tip of his tongue to a nice young lady who takes an interest in listening to him.

Do not pretend, with a puzzled attempt at a perspicacious expression of countenance, to comprehend admirably an exposition which flies miles over your head. At all hazards learn something. Your friend will, at least, admire your candour, modesty, and courage, and appreciate your desire to learn. Every blank you fill will make it easier to you to take an interest in higher ranges of conversation, and fit you more and more for the society of higher classes of intelligence. The power of taking interest implies the gift of awakening interest. All progress is interesting. There are country gentlemen who can take an interest in looking over a gate day by day to observe the growth of turnips; that is but a low form of progress. A teachable child is more interesting than many turnip-fields, and a teachable woman, with bright eyes, who "improves each shining hour," not only has many chances in the year of finding a sensible husband, but has many years to do it in. She grows old so much more slowly than the flirt; her mind brightens as her complexion fades. Indeed, the power of mind over matter will go further than this. I have known girls who were positively plain at twenty grow comparatively good-looking at thirty;—but then they had been making themselves agreeable in the very best fashion all their lives. I have in my memory especially one dear contemporary of mine, whom I had the wit to love and value though not the wisdom to imitate. She was almost ugly in her youth; moreover, she was shy and awkward. She had a painful consciousness of her plainness, which she got over as she ceased to think or care about her looks. For Nature had gifted her with a mind and heart as beautiful as her features were plain. By the time that I was become rather an angular old maid, her inward woman had so got the better of her outward that she was really an attractive woman; and I have heard an eminent painter say of her that her face was almost the loveliest he had seen. She married a man of considerable distinction when she was near forty, and I am convinced that they were as "happy ever afterwards" as any prince and princess in a fairy tale. Hundreds of people loved her;—men and women as well. Women did not resent her popularity with men, for it was an attraction perfectly clear of all personal vanity and conscious flattery. She was as modest as Burns's "daisy." I never saw her "make an eye" in my life. I believe firmly that she enjoyed more happiness in one of her least happy years than I did in ten of my best. But she deserved happiness, and I didn't. My dear, I hope you will follow her example and not mine. She was a wise virgin and I was a silly flirt.

PHINEAS FINN, THE IRISH MEMBER.

CHAPTER XX.

THE DEBATE ON THE BALLOT.

Phineas took his seat in the House with a consciousness of much inward trepidation of heart on that night of the ballot debate. After leaving Lord Chiltern he went down to his club and dined alone. Three or four men came and spoke to him; but he could not talk to them at his ease, nor did he quite know what they were saying to him. He was going to do something which he longed to achieve, but the very idea of which, now that it was so near to him, was a terror to him. To be in the House and not to speak would, to his thinking, be a disgraceful failure. Indeed, he could not continue to keep his seat unless he spoke. He had been put there that he might speak. He would speak. Of course he would speak. Had he not already been conspicuous almost as a boy orator? And yet, at this moment he did not know whether he was eating mutton or beef, or who was standing opposite to him and talking to him, so much was he in dread of the ordeal which he had prepared for himself. As he went down to the House after dinner, he almost made up his mind that it would be a good thing to leave London by one of the night mail trains. He felt himself to be stiff and stilted as he walked, and that his clothes were uneasy to him. When he turned into Westminster Hall he regretted more keenly than ever he had done that he had seceded from the keeping of Mr. Low. He could, he thought, have spoken very well in court, and would there have learned that self-confidence which now failed him so terribly. It was, however, too late to think of that. He could only go in and take his seat.

He went in and took his seat, and the chamber seemed to him to be mysteriously large, as though benches were crowded over benches, and galleries over galleries. He had been long enough in the House to have lost the original awe inspired by the Speaker and the clerks of the House, by the row of Ministers, and by the unequalled importance of the place. On ordinary occasions he could saunter in and out, and whisper at his ease to a neighbour. But on this occasion he went direct to the bench on which he ordinarily sat, and began at once to rehearse to himself his speech. He had in truth been doing this all day, in spite of the effort that he had made to rid himself of all memory of the occasion. He had been collecting the heads of his speech while Mr. Low had been talking to him, and refreshing

his quotations in the presence of Lord Chiltern and the dumb-bells. He had taxed his memory and his intellect with various tasks, which, as he feared, would not adjust themselves one with another. He had learned the headings of his speech,—so that one heading might follow the other, and nothing be forgotten. And he had learned verbatim the words which he intended to utter under each heading, —with a hope that if any one compact part should be destroyed or injured in its compactness by treachery of memory, or by the course of the debate, each other compact part might be there in its entirety, ready for use;—or at least so many of the compact parts as treachery of memory and the accidents of the debate might leave to him; so that his speech might be like a vessel, watertight in its various compartments, that would float by the buoyancy of its stern and bow, even though the hold should be waterlogged. But this use of his composed words, even though he should be able to carry it through, would not complete his work;—for it would be his duty to answer in some sort those who had gone before him, and in order to do this he must be able to insert, without any pre-arrangement of words or ideas, little intercalatory parts between those compact masses of argument with which he had been occupying himself for many laborious hours. As he looked round upon the House and perceived that everything was dim before him, that all his original awe of the House had returned, and with it a present quaking fear that made him feel the pulsations of his own heart, he became painfully aware that the task he had prepared for himself was too great. He should, on this the occasion of his rising to his maiden legs, have either prepared for himself a short general speech, which could indeed have done little for his credit in the House, but which might have served to carry off the novelty of the thing, and have introduced him to the sound of his own voice within those walls,—or he should have trusted to what his wit and spirit would produce for him on the spur of the moment, and not have burdened himself with a huge exercise of memory. During the presentation of a few petitions he tried to repeat to himself the first of his compact parts,—a compact part on which, as it might certainly be brought into use let the debate have gone as it might, he had expended great care. He had flattered himself that there was something of real strength in his words as he repeated them to himself in the comfortable seclusion of his own room, and he had made them so ready to his tongue that he thought it to be impossible that he should forget even an intonation. Now he found that he could not remember the first phrases without unloosing and looking at a small roll of paper which he held furtively in his hand. What was the good of looking at it? He would forget it again in the next moment. He had intended to satisfy the most eager of his friends, and to astound his opponents. As it was, no one would be satisfied,—and none astounded but they who had trusted in him.

The debate began, and if the leisure afforded by a long and tedious speech could have served him, he might have had leisure enough. He tried at first to follow all that this advocate for the ballot might say, hoping thence to acquire the impetus of strong interest; but he soon wearied of the work, and began to long that the speech might be ended, although the period of his own martyrdom would thereby be brought nearer to him. At half-past seven so many members had deserted their seats, that Phineas began to think that he might be saved all further pains by a "count out." He reckoned the members present and found that they were below the mystic forty,—first by two, then by four, by five, by seven, and at one time by eleven. It was not for him to ask the Speaker to count the House, but he wondered that no one else should do so. And yet, as the idea of this termination to the night's work came upon him, and as he thought of his lost labour, he almost took courage again,—almost dreaded rather than wished for the interference of some malicious member. But there was no malicious member then present, or else it was known that Lords of the Treasury and Lords of the Admiralty would flock in during the Speaker's ponderous counting,—and thus the slow length of the ballot-lover's verbosity was permitted to evolve itself without interruption. At eight o'clock he had completed his catalogue of illustrations, and immediatety Mr. Monk rose from the Treasury bench to explain the grounds on which the Government must decline to support the motion before the House.

Phineas was aware that Mr. Monk intended to speak, and was aware also that his speech would be very short. "My idea is," he had said to Phineas, "that every man possessed of the franchise should dare to have and to express a political opinion of his own;—that otherwise the franchise is not worth having; and that men will learn that when all so dare, no evil can come from such daring. As the ballot would make any courage of that kind unnecessary, I dislike the ballot. I shall confine myself to that, and leave the illustration to younger debaters." Phineas also had been informed that Mr. Turnbull would reply to Mr. Monk, with the purpose of crushing Mr. Monk into dust, and Phineas had prepared his speech with something of an intention of subsequently crushing Mr. Turnbull. He knew, however, that he could not command his opportunity. There was the chapter of accidents to which he must accommodate himself; but such had been his programme for the evening.

Mr. Monk made his speech,—and though he was short, he was very fiery and energetic. Quick as lightning words of wrath and scorn flew from him, in which he painted the cowardice, the meanness, the falsehood of the ballot. "The ballot-box," he said, "was the grave of all true political opinion." Though he spoke hardly for ten minutes, he seemed to say more than enough, ten times enough, to slaughter the argument of the former speaker. At every hot word

as it fell, Phineas was driven to regret that a paragraph of his own was taken away from him, and that his choicest morsels of standing ground were being cut from under his feet. When Mr. Monk sat down, Phineas felt that Mr. Monk had said all that he, Phineas Finn, had intended to say.

Then Mr. Turnbull rose slowly from the bench below the gangway. With a speaker so frequent and so famous as Mr. Turnbull no hurry is necessary. He is sure to have his opportunity. The Speaker's eye is ever travelling to the accustomed spots. Mr. Turnbull rose slowly and began his oration very mildly. "There was nothing," he said, "that he admired so much as the poetic imagery and the high-flown sentiment of his right honourable friend the member for West Bromwich,"—Mr. Monk sat for West Bromwich,—"unless it were the stubborn facts and unanswered arguments of his honourable friend who had brought forward this motion." Then Mr. Turnbull proceeded after his fashion to crush Mr. Monk. He was very prosaic, very clear both in voice and language, very harsh, and very unscrupulous. He and Mr. Monk had been joined together in politics for over twenty years;—but one would have thought, from Mr. Turnbull's words, that they had been the bitterest of enemies. Mr. Monk was taunted with his office, taunted with his desertion of the liberal party, taunted with his ambition,—and taunted with his lack of ambition. "I once thought," said Mr. Turnbull,—"nay, not long ago I thought, that he and I would have fought this battle for the people, shoulder to shoulder, and knee to knee;—but he has preferred that the knee next to his own shall wear a garter, and that the shoulder which supports him shall be decked with a blue ribbon,—as shoulders, I presume, are decked in those closet conferences which are called Cabinets."

Just after this, while Mr. Turnbull was still going on with a variety of illustrations drawn from the United States, Barrington Erle stepped across the benches up to the place where Phineas was sitting, and whispered a few words into his ear. "Bonteen is prepared to answer Turnbull, and wishes to do it. I told him that I thought you should have the opportunity, if you wish it." Phineas was not ready with a reply to Erle at the spur of the moment. "Somebody told me," continued Erle, "that you had said that you would like to speak to-night."

"So I did," said Phineas.

"Shall I tell Bonteen that you will do it."

The chamber seemed to swim round before our hero's eyes. Mr. Turnbull was still going on with his clear, loud, unpleasant voice, but there was no knowing how long he might go on. Upon Phineas, if he should now consent, might devolve the duty, within ten minutes, within three minutes, of rising there before a full House to defend his great friend, Mr. Monk, from a gross personal attack. Was it fit that

such a novice as he should undertake such a work as that? Were he to do so, all that speech which he had prepared, with its various self-floating parts, must go for nothing. The task was exactly that which, of all tasks, he would best like to have accomplished, and to have accomplished well. But if he should fail! And he felt that he would fail. For such work a man should have all his senses about him,—his full courage, perfect confidence, something almost approaching to contempt for listening opponents, and nothing of fear in regard to listening friends. He should be as a cock in his own farmyard, master of all the circumstances around him. But Phineas Finn had not even as yet heard the sound of his own voice in that room. At this moment, so confused was he, that he did not know where sat Mr. Mildmay, and where Mr. Daubeny. All was confused, and there arose as it were a sound of waters in his ears, and a feeling as of a great hell around him. "I had rather wait," he said at last. "Bonteen had better reply." Barrington Erle looked into his face, and then stepping back across the benches, told Mr. Bonteen that the opportunity was his.

Mr. Turnbull continued speaking quite long enough to give poor Phineas time for repentance; but repentance was of no use. He had decided against himself, and his decision could not be reversed. He would have left the House, only it seemed to him that had he done so every one would look at him. He drew his hat down over his eyes, and remained in his place, hating Mr. Bonteen, hating Barrington Erle, hating Mr. Turnbull,—but hating no one so much as he hated himself. He had disgraced himself for ever, and could never recover the occasion which he had lost.

Mr. Bonteen's speech was in no way remarkable. Mr. Monk, he said, had done the State good service by adding his wisdom and patriotism to the Cabinet. The sort of argument which Mr. Bonteen used to prove that a man who has gained credit as a legislator should in process of time become a member of the executive, is trite and common, and was not used by Mr. Bonteen with any special force. Mr. Bonteen was glib of tongue, and possessed that familiarity with the place which poor Phineas had lacked so sorely. There was one moment, however, which was terrible to Phineas. As soon as Mr. Bonteen had shown the purpose for which he was on his legs, Mr. Monk looked round at Phineas, as though in reproach. He had expected that this work should fall into the hands of one who would perform it with more warmth of heart than could be expected from Mr. Bonteen. When Mr. Bonteen ceased, two or three other short speeches were made, and members fired off their little guns. Phineas having lost so great an opportunity, would not now consent to accept one that should be comparatively valueless. Then there came a division. The motion was lost by a large majority,—by any number you might choose to name, as Phineas had said to Lord Brentford;

but in that there was no triumph to the poor wretch who had failed through fear, and who was now a coward in his own esteem.

He left the House alone, carefully avoiding all speech with any one. As he came out he had seen Laurence Fitzgibbon in the lobby, but he had gone on without pausing a moment, so that he might avoid his friend. And when he was out in Palace Yard, where was he to go next? He looked at his watch, and found that it was just ten. He did not dare to go to his club, and it was impossible for him to go home and to bed. He was very miserable, and nothing would comfort him but sympathy? Was there any one who would listen to his abuse of himself, and would then answer him with kindly apologies for his own weakness. Mrs. Bunce would do it if she knew how, but sympathy from Mrs. Bunce would hardly avail. There was but one person in the world to whom he could tell his own humiliation with any hope of comfort, and that person was Lady Laura Kennedy. Sympathy from any man would have been distasteful to him. He had thought for a moment of flinging himself at Mr. Monk's feet and telling all his weakness;—but he could not have endured pity even from Mr. Monk. It was not to be endured from any man.

He thought that Lady Laura Kennedy would be at home, and probably alone. He knew, at any rate, that he might be allowed to knock at her door, even at that hour. He had left Mr. Kennedy in the House, and there he would probably remain for the next hour. There was no man more constant than Mr. Kennedy in seeing the work of the day,—or of the night,—to its end. So Phineas walked up Victoria Street, and from thence into Grosvenor Place, and knocked at Lady Laura's door. "Yes; Lady Laura was at home; and alone." He was shown up into the drawing-room, and there he found Lady Laura waiting for her husband.

"So the great debate is over," she said, with as much of irony as she knew how to throw into the epithet.

"Yes; it is over."

"And what have they done,—those leviathans of the people?"

Then Phineas told her what was the majority.

"Is there anything the matter with you, Mr. Finn?" she said, looking at him suddenly. "Are you not well?"

"Yes; I am very well."

"Will you not sit down? There is something wrong, I know. What is it?"

"I have simply been the greatest idiot, the greatest coward, the most awkward ass that ever lived!"

"What do you mean?"

"I do not know why I should come to tell you of it at this hour at night, but I have come that I might tell you. Probably because there is no one else in the whole world who would not laugh at me."

"At any rate, I shall not laugh at you," said Lady Laura.

"But you will despise me."

"That I am sure I shall not do."

"You cannot help it. I despise myself. For years I have placed before myself the ambition of speaking in the House of Commons;—for years I have been thinking whether there would ever come to me an opportunity of making myself heard in that assembly, which I consider to be the first in the world. To-day the opportunity has been offered to me,—and, though the motion was nothing, the opportunity was great. The subject was one on which I was thoroughly prepared. The manner in which I was summoned was most flattering to me. I was especially called on to perform a task which was most congenial to my feelings;—and I declined because I was afraid."

"You had thought too much about it, my friend," said Lady Laura.

"Too much or too little, what does it matter?" replied Phineas, in despair. "There is the fact. I could not do it. Do you remember the story of Conachar in the 'Fair Maid of Perth;'—how his heart refused to give him blood enough to fight? He had been suckled with the milk of a timid creature, and, though he could die, there was none of the strength of manhood in him. It is about the same thing with me, I take it."

"I do not think you are at all like Conachar," said Lady Laura.

"I am equally disgraced, and I must perish after the same fashion. I shall apply for the Chiltern Hundreds in a day or two."

"You will do nothing of the kind," said Lady Laura, getting up from her chair and coming towards him. "You shall not leave this room till you have promised me that you will do nothing of the kind. I do not know as yet what has occurred to-night; but I do know that that modesty which has kept you silent is more often a grace than a disgrace."

This was the kind of sympathy which he wanted. She drew her chair nearer to him, and then he explained to her as accurately as he could what had taken place in the House on this evening,—how he had prepared his speech, how he had felt that his preparation was vain, how he perceived from the course of the debate that if he spoke at all his speech must be very different from what he had first intended; how he had declined to take upon himself a task which seemed to require so close a knowledge of the ways of the House and of the temper of the men, as the defence of such a man as Mr. Monk. In accusing himself he, unconsciously, excused himself, and his excuse, in Lady Laura's ears, was more valid than his accusation.

"And you would give it all up for that?" she said.

"Yes; I think I ought."

"I have very little doubt but that you were right in allowing Mr. Bonteen to undertake such a task. I should simply explain to Mr. Monk that you felt too keen an interest in his welfare to stand up as

an untried member in his defence. It is not, I think, the work for a man who is not at home in the House. I am sure Mr. Monk will feel this, and I am quite certain that Mr. Kennedy will think that you have been right."

"I do not care what Mr. Kennedy may think."

"Why do you say that, Mr. Finn? That is not courteous."

"Simply because I care so much what Mr. Kennedy's wife may think. Your opinion is all in all to me,—only that I know you are too kind to me."

"He would not be too kind to you. He is never too kind to any one. He is justice itself."

Phineas, as he heard the tones of her voice, could not but feel that there was in Lady Laura's words something of an accusation against her husband.

"I hate justice," said Phineas. "I know that justice would condemn me. But love and friendship know nothing of justice. The value of love is that it overlooks faults, and forgives even crimes."

"I, at any rate," said Lady Laura, "will forgive the crime of your silence in the House. My strong belief in your success will not be in the least affected by what you tell me of your failure to-night. You must await another opportunity; and, if possible, you should be less anxious as to your own performance. There is Violet." As Lady Laura spoke the last words, there was a sound of a carriage stopping in the street, and the front door was immediately opened. "She is staying here, but has been dining with her uncle, Admiral Effingham." Then Violet Effingham entered the room, rolled up in pretty white furs, and silk cloaks, and lace shawls. "Here is Mr. Finn, come to tell us of the debate about the ballot."

"I don't care twopence about the ballot," said Violet, as she put out her hand to Phineas. "Are we going to have a new iron fleet built? That's the question."

"Sir Simeon has come out strong to-night," said Lady Laura.

"There is no political question of any importance except the question of the iron fleet," said Violet. "I am quite sure of that, and so, if Mr. Finn can tell me nothing about the iron fleet, I'll go to bed."

"Mr. Kennedy will tell you everything when he comes home," said Phineas.

"Oh, Mr. Kennedy! Mr. Kennedy never tells one anything. I doubt whether Mr. Kennedy thinks that any woman knows the meaning of the British Constitution."

"Do you know what it means, Violet," asked Lady Laura.

"To be sure I do. It is liberty to growl about the iron fleet, or the ballot, or the taxes, or the peers, or the bishops,—or anything else, except the House of Commons. That's the British Constitution. Good-night, Mr Finn."

"What a beautiful creature she is!" said Phineas.

"Yes, indeed," said Lady Laura.

"And full of wit and grace and pleasantness. I do not wonder at your brother's choice."

It will be remembered that this was said on the day before Lord Chiltern had made his offer for the third time.

"Poor Oswald! he does not know as yet that she is in town."

After that Phineas went, not wishing to await the return of Mr. Kennedy. He had felt that Violet Effingham had come into the room just in time to remedy a great difficulty. He did not wish to speak of his love to a married woman,—to the wife of the man who called him friend,—to a woman who he felt sure would have rebuked him. But he could hardly have restrained himself had not Miss Effingham been there.

But as he went home he thought more of Miss Effingham than he did of Lady Laura; and I think that the voice of Miss Effingham had done almost as much towards comforting him as had the kindness of the other.

At any rate, he had been comforted.

CHAPTER XXI.

"DO BE PUNCTUAL."

On the very morning after his failure in the House of Commons, when Phineas was reading in the Telegraph,—he took the Telegraph not from choice but for economy,—the words of that debate which he had heard and in which he should have taken a part, a most unwelcome visit was paid to him. It was near eleven, and the breakfast things were still on the table. He was at this time on a Committee of the House with reference to the use of potted peas in the army and navy, at which he had sat once,—at a preliminary meeting,—and in reference to which he had already resolved that as he had failed so frightfully in debate, he would certainly do his duty to the utmost in the more easy but infinitely more tedious work of the Committee Room. The Committee met at twelve, and he intended to walk down to the Reform Club, and then to the House. He had just completed his reading of the debate and of the leaders in the Telegraph on the subject. He had told himself how little the writer of the article knew about Mr. Turnbull, how little about Mr. Monk, and how little about the people,—such being his own ideas as to the qualifications of the writer of that leading article,—and was about to start. But Mrs. Bunce arrested him by telling him that there was a man below who wanted to see him.

"What sort of a man, Mrs. Bunce?"

"He ain't a gentleman, sir."

"Did he give his name?"

"He did not, sir; but I know it's about money. I know the ways of them so well. I've seen this one's face before somewhere."

"You had better show him up," said Phineas. He knew well the business on which the man was come. The man wanted money for that bill which Laurence Fitzgibbon had sent afloat, and which Phineas had endorsed. Phineas had never as yet fallen so deeply into troubles of money as to make it necessary that he need refuse himself to any callers on that score, and he did not choose to do so now. Nevertheless he most heartily wished that he had left his lodgings for the club before the man had come. This was not the first he had heard of the bill being overdue and unpaid. The bill had been brought to him noted a month since, and then he had simply told the youth who brought it that he would see Mr. Fitzgibbon and have the matter settled. He had spoken to his friend Laurence, and Laurence had simply assured him that all should be made right in two days,—or, at furthest, by the end of a week. Since that time he had observed that his friend had been somewhat shy of speaking to him when no others were with them. Phineas would not have alluded to the bill had he and Laurence been alone together; but he had been quick enough to guess from his friend's manner that the matter was not settled. Now, no doubt, serious trouble was about to commence.

The visitor was a little man with grey hair and a white cravat, some sixty years of age, dressed in black, with a very decent hat,—which, on entering the room, he at once put down on the nearest chair,—with reference to whom, any judge on the subject would have concurred at first sight in the decision pronounced by Mrs. Bunce, though none but a judge very well used to sift the causes of his own conclusions could have given the reasons for that early decision. "He ain't a gentleman," Mrs. Bunce had said. And the man certainly was not a gentleman. The old man in the white cravat was very neatly dressed, and carried himself without any of that humility which betrays one class of uncertified aspirants to gentility, or of that assumed arrogance which is at once fatal to another class. But, nevertheless, Mrs. Bunce had seen at a glance that he was not a gentleman,—had seen, moreover, that such a man could have come only upon one mission. She was right there too. This visitor had come about money.

"About this bill, Mr. Finn," said the visitor, proceeding to take out of his breast coat-pocket a rather large leathern case, as he advanced up towards the fire. "My name is Clarkson, Mr. Finn. If I may venture so far, I'll take a chair."

"Certainly, Mr. Clarkson," said Phineas, getting up and pointing to a seat.

"Thankye, Mr. Finn, thankye. We shall be more comfortable doing business sitting, shan't we?" Whereupon the horrid little man drew

himself close in to the fire, and spreading out his leathern case upon his knees, began to turn over one suspicious bit of paper after another, as though he were uncertain in what part of his portfolio lay this identical bit which he was seeking. He seemed to be quite at home, and to feel that there was no ground whatever for hurry in such comfortable quarters. Phineas hated him at once,—with a hatred altogether unconnected with the difficulty which his friend Fitzgibbon had brought upon him.

"Here it is," said Mr. Clarkson at last, "Oh, dear me, dear me! the third of November, and here we are in March! I didn't think it was so bad as this;—I didn't indeed. This is very bad,—very bad! And for Parliament gents, too, who should be more punctual than anybody, because of the privilege. Shouldn't they now, Mr. Finn?"

"All men should be punctual, I suppose," said Phineas.

"Of course they should; of course they should. I always say to my gents, 'Be punctual, and I'll do anything for you.' But, perhaps, Mr. Finn, you can hand me a cheque for this amount, and then you and I will begin square."

"Indeed I cannot, Mr. Clarkson."

"Not hand me a cheque for it!"

"Upon my word, no."

"That's very bad;—very bad indeed. Then I suppose I must take the half, and renew for the remainder, though I don't like it;—I don't indeed."

"I can pay no part of that bill, Mr. Clarkson."

"Pay no part of it!" and Mr. Clarkson, in order that he might the better express his surprise, arrested his hand in the very act of poking his host's fire.

"If you'll allow me, I'll manage the fire," said Phineas, putting out his hand for the poker.

But Mr. Clarkson was fond of poking fires, and would not surrender the poker. "Pay no part of it!" he said again, holding the poker away from Phineas in his left hand. "Don't say that, Mr. Finn. Pray don't say that. Don't drive me to be severe. I don't like to be severe with my gents. I'll do anything, Mr. Finn, if you'll only be punctual."

"The fact is, Mr. Clarkson, I have never had one penny of consideration for that bill, and——"

"Oh, Mr. Finn! oh, Mr. Finn!" and then Mr. Clarkson had his will of the fire.

"I never had one penny of consideration for that bill," continued Phineas. "Of course I don't deny my responsibility."

"No, Mr. Finn; you can't deny that. Here it is;—Phineas Finn;—and everybody knows you, because you're a Parliament gent."

"I don't deny it. But I had no reason to suppose that I should be called upon for the money when I accommodated my friend, Mr.

Fitzgibbon, and I have not got it. That is the long and the short of it. I must see him and take care that arrangements are made."

"Arrangements!"

"Yes, arrangements for settling the bill."

"He hasn't got the money, Mr. Finn. You know that as well as I do."

"I know nothing about it, Mr. Clarkson."

"Oh yes, Mr. Finn; you know; you know."

"I tell you I know nothing about it," said Phineas, waxing angry.

"As to Mr. Fitzgibbon, he's the pleasantest gent that ever lived. Isn't he now? I've know'd him these ten years. I don't suppose that for ten years I've been without his name in my pocket. But, bless you, Mr. Finn, there's an end to everything. I shouldn't have looked at this bit of paper if it hadn't been for your signature. Of course not. You're just beginning, and it's natural you should want a little help. You'll find me always ready, if you'll only be punctual."

"I tell you again, sir, that I never had a shilling out of that for myself, and do not want any such help." Here Mr. Clarkson smiled sweetly. "I gave my name to my friend simply to oblige him."

"I like you Irish gents because you do hang together so close," said Mr. Clarkson.

"Simply to oblige him," continued Phineas. "As I said before, I know that I am responsible; but, as I said before also, I have not the means of taking up that bill. I will see Mr. Fitzgibbon, and let you know what we propose to do." Then Phineas got up from his seat and took his hat. It was full time that he should go down to his Committee. But Mr. Clarkson did not get up from his seat. "I'm afraid I must ask you to leave me now, Mr. Clarkson, as I have business down at the House."

"Business at the House never presses, Mr. Finn," said Mr. Clarkson. "That's the best of Parliament. I've known Parliament gents this thirty years and more. Would you believe it,—I've had a Prime Minister's name in that portfolio; that I have; and a Lord Chancellor's; that I have;—and an Archbishop's too. I know what Parliament is, Mr. Finn. Come, come; don't put me off with Parliament."

There he sat before the fire with his pouch open before him, and Phineas had no power of moving him. Could Phineas have paid him the money which was manifestly due to him on the bill, the man would of course have gone; but failing in that, Phineas could not turn him out. There was a black cloud on the young member's brow, and great anger at his heart,—against Fitzgibbon rather than against the man who was sitting there before him. "Sir," he said, "it is really imperative that I should go. I am pledged to an appointment at the House at twelve, and it wants now only a quarter. I regret that your interview with me should be so unsatisfactory, but I can only promise you that I will see Mr. Fitzgibbon."

"And when shall I call again, Mr. Finn?"

"Perhaps I had better write to you," said Phineas.

"Oh dear, no," said Mr. Clarkson. "I should much prefer to look in. Looking in is always best. We can get to understand one another in that way. Let me see. I daresay you're not particular. Suppose I say Sunday morning."

"Really, I could not see you on Sunday morning, Mr. Clarkson."

"Parliament gents ain't generally particular,—'specially not among the Catholics," pleaded Mr. Clarkson.

"I am always engaged on Sundays," said Phineas.

"Suppose we say Monday,—or Tuesday. Tuesday morning at eleven. And do be punctual, Mr. Finn. At Tuesday morning I'll come, and then no doubt I shall find you ready." Whereupon Mr. Clarkson slowly put up his bills within his portfolio, and then, before Phineas knew where he was, had warmly shaken that poor dismayed member of Parliament by the hand. "Only do be punctual, Mr. Finn," he said, as he made his way down the stairs.

It was now twelve, and Phineas rushed off to a cab. He was in such a fervour of rage and misery that he could hardly think of his position, or what he had better do, till he got into the Committee room; and when there he could think of nothing else. He intended to go deeply into the question of potted peas, holding an equal balance between the assailed Government offices on the one hand, and the advocates of the potted peas on the other. The potters of the peas, who wanted to sell their article to the Crown, declared that an extensive,—perhaps we may say, an unlimited,—use of the article would save the whole army and navy from the scourges of scurvy, dyspepsia, and rheumatism, would be the best safeguard against typhus and other fevers, and would be an invaluable aid in all other maladies to which soldiers and sailors are peculiarly subject. The peas in question were grown on a large scale in Holstein, and their growth had been fostered with the special object of doing good to the British army and navy. The peas were so cheap that there would be a great saving in money,—and it really had seemed to many that the officials of the Horse Guards and the Admiralty had been actuated by some fiendish desire to deprive their men of salutary fresh vegetables, simply because they were of foreign growth. But the officials of the War Office and the Admiralty declared that the potted peas in question were hardly fit for swine. The motion for the Committee had been made by a gentleman of the opposition, and Phineas had been put upon it as an independent member. He had resolved to give to it all his mind, and, as far as he was concerned, to reach a just decision, in which there should be no favour shown to the Government side. New brooms are proverbial for thorough work, and in this Committee work Phineas was as yet a new broom. But, unfortunately, on this day his mind was so harassed that he could hardly understand what was

"And do be punctual, Mr. Finn."

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going on. It did not, perhaps, much signify, as the witnesses examined were altogether agricultural. They only proved the production of peas in Holstein,—a fact as to which Phineas had no doubt. The proof was naturally slow, as the evidence was given in German, and had to be translated into English. And the work of the day was much impeded by a certain member who unfortunately spoke German, who seemed to be fond of speaking German before his brethren of the Committee, and who was curious as to agriculture in Holstein generally. The chairman did not understand German, and there was a difficulty in checking this gentleman, and in making him understand that his questions were not relevant to the issue.

Phineas could not keep his mind during the whole afternoon from the subject of his misfortune. What should he do if this horrid man came to him once or twice a week? He certainly did owe the man the money. He must admit that to himself. The man no doubt was a dishonest knave who had discounted the bill probably at fifty per cent.; but, nevertheless, Phineas had made himself legally responsible for the amount. The privilege of the House prohibited him from arrest. He thought of that very often, but the thought only made him the more unhappy. Would it not be said, and might it not be said truly, that he had incurred this responsibility,—a responsibility which he was altogether unequal to answer,—because he was so protected? He did feel that a certain consciousness of his privilege had been present to him when he had put his name across the paper, and that there had been dishonesty in that very consciousness. And of what service would his privilege be to him, if this man could harass every hour of his life? The man was to be with him again in a day or two, and when the appointment had been proposed, he, Phineas, had not dared to negative it. And how was he to escape? As for paying the bill, that with him was altogether impossible. The man had told him,—and he had believed the man,—that payment by Fitzgibbon was out of the question. And yet Fitzgibbon was the son of a peer, whereas he was only the son of a country doctor! Of course Fitzgibbon must make some effort,—some great effort,—and have the thing settled. Alas, alas! He knew enough of the world already to feel that the hope was vain.

He went down from the Committee room into the House, and he dined at the House, and remained there until eight or nine at night; but Fitzgibbon did not come. He then went to the Reform Club, but he was not there. Both at the club and in the House many men spoke to him about the debate of the previous night, expressing surprise that he had not spoken,—making him more and more wretched. He saw Mr. Monk, but Mr. Monk was walking arm in arm with his colleague, Mr. Palliser, and Phineas could do no more than just speak to them. He thought that Mr. Monk's nod of recognition was very cold. That might be fancy, but it certainly was a fact that

Mr. Monk only nodded to him. He would tell Mr. Monk the truth, and then, if Mr. Monk chose to quarrel with him, he at any rate would take no step to renew their friendship.

From the Reform Club he went to the Shakspeare, a smaller club to which Fitzgibbon belonged,—and of which Phineas much wished to become a member,—and to which he knew that his friend resorted when he wished to enjoy himself thoroughly, and to be at ease in his inn. Men at the Shakspeare could do as they pleased. There were no politics there, no fashion, no stiffness, and no rules,—so men said; but that was hardly true. Everybody called everybody by his Christian name, and members smoked all over the house. They who did not belong to the Shakspeare thought it an Elysium upon earth; and they who did, believed it to be among Pandemoniums the most pleasant. Phineas called at the Shakspeare, and was told by the porter that Mr. Fitzgibbon was upstairs. He was shown into the strangers' room, and in five minutes his friend came down to him.

"I want you to come down to the Reform with me," said Phineas.

"By jingo, my dear fellow, I'm in the middle of a rubber of whist."

"There has been a man with me about that bill."

"What;—Clarkson?"

"Yes, Clarkson," said Phineas.

"Don't mind him," said Fitzgibbon.

"That's nonsense. How am I to help minding him. I must mind him. He is coming to me again on Tuesday morning."

"Don't see him."

"How can I help seeing him?"

"Make them say you're not at home."

"He has made an appointment. He has told me that he'll never leave me alone. He'll be the death of me if this is not settled."

"It shall be settled, my dear fellow. I'll see about it. I'll see about it and write you a line. You must excuse me now, because those fellows are waiting. I'll have it all arranged."

Again as Phineas went home he thoroughly wished that he had not seceded from Mr. Low.

CHAPTER XXII.

LADY BALDOCK AT HOME.

About the middle of March Lady Baldock came up from Baddingham to London, coerced into doing so, as Violet Effingham declared, in thorough opposition to all her own tastes, by the known wishes of her friends and relatives. Her friends and relatives, so Miss Effingham insinuated, were unanimous in wishing that Lady Baldock should remain at Baddingham Park, and therefore,—that wish having been indiscreetly expressed,—she had put herself to great inconvenience,

and had come to London in March. "Gustavus will go mad," said Violet to Lady Laura. The Gustavus in question was the Lord Baldock of the present generation, Miss Effingham's Lady Baldock being the peer's mother. "Why does not Lord Baldock take a house himself?" asked Lady Laura. "Don't you know, my dear," Violet answered, "how much we Baddingham people think of money? We don't like being vexed and driven mad, but even that is better than keeping up two households." As regarded Violet, the injury arising from Lady Baldock's early migration was very great, for she was thus compelled to move from Grosvenor Place to Lady Baldock's house in Berkeley Square. "As you are so fond of being in London, Augusta and I have made up our minds to come up before Easter," Lady Baldock had written to her.

"I shall go to her now," Violet had said to her friend, "because I have not quite made up my mind as to what I will do for the future."

"Marry Oswald, and be your own mistress."

"I mean to be my own mistress without marrying Oswald, though I don't see my way quite clearly as yet. I think I shall set up a little house of my own, and let the world say what it pleases. I suppose they couldn't make me out to be a lunatic."

"I shouldn't wonder if they were to try," said Lady Laura.

"They could not prevent me in any other way. But I am in the dark as yet, and so I shall be obedient and go to my aunt."

Miss Effingham went to Berkeley Square, and Phineas Finn was introduced to Lady Baldock. He had been often in Grosvenor Place, and had seen Violet frequently. Mr. Kennedy gave periodical dinners, —once a week,—to which everybody went who could get an invitation; and Phineas had been a guest more than once. Indeed, in spite of his miseries he had taken to dining out a good deal, and was popular as an eater of dinners. He could talk when wanted, and did not talk too much, was pleasant in manners and appearance, and had already achieved a certain recognised position in London life. Of those who knew him intimately, not one in twenty were aware from whence he came, what was his parentage, or what his means of living. He was a member of Parliament, a friend of Mr. Kennedy's, was intimate with Mr. Monk, though an Irishman did not as a rule herd with other Irishmen, and was the right sort of person to have at your house. Some people said he was a cousin of Lord Brentford's, and others declared that he was Lord Chiltern's earliest friend. There he was, however, with a position gained, and even Lady Baldock asked him to her house.

Lady Baldock had evenings. People went to her house, and stood about the room and on the stairs, talked to each other for half an hour, and went away. In these March days there was no crowding, but still there were always enough of people there to show that Lady Baldock was successful. Why people should have gone to Lady

Baldock's I cannot explain;—but there are houses to which people go without any reason. Phineas received a little card asking him to go, and he always went.

"I think you like my friend, Mr. Finn," Lady Laura said to Miss Effingham, after the first of these evenings.

"Yes, I do. I like him decidedly."

"So do I. I should hardly have thought that you would have taken a fancy to him."

"I hardly know what you call taking a fancy," said Violet. "I am not quite sure I like to be told that I have taken a fancy for a young man."

"I mean no offence, my dear."

"Of course you don't. But, to speak truth, I think I have rather taken a fancy to him. There is just enough of him, but not too much. I don't mean materially,—in regard to his inches; but as to his mental belongings. I hate a stupid man who can't talk to me, and I hate a clever man who talks me down. I don't like a man who is too lazy to make any effort to shine; but I particularly dislike the man who is always striving for effect. I abominate a humble man, but yet I love to perceive that a man acknowledges the superiority of my sex, and youth, and all that kind of thing."

"You want to be flattered without plain flattery."

"Of course I do. A man who would tell me that I am pretty, unless he is over seventy, ought to be kicked out of the room. But a man who can't show me that he thinks me so without saying a word about it, is a lout. Now in all those matters, your friend, Mr. Finn, seems to know what he is about. In other words, he makes himself pleasant, and, therefore, one is glad to see him."

"I suppose you do not mean to fall in love with him?"

"Not that I know of, my dear. But when I do, I'll be sure to give you notice."

I fear that there was more of earnestness in Lady Laura's last question than Miss Effingham had supposed. She had declared to herself over and over again that she had never been in love with Phineas Finn. She had acknowledged to herself, before Mr. Kennedy had asked her hand in marriage, that there had been danger,—that she could have learned to love the man if such love would not have been ruinous to her,—that the romance of such a passion would have been pleasant to her. She had gone farther than this, and had said to herself that she would have given way to that romance, and would have been ready to accept such love if offered to her, had she not put it out of her own power to marry a poor man by her generosity to her brother. Then she had thrust the thing aside, and had clearly understood,—she thought that she had clearly understood,—that life for her must be a matter of business. Was it not the case with nine out of every ten among mankind, with nine hundred and ninety-nine out

of every thousand, that life must be a matter of business and not of romance? Of course she could not marrry Mr. Finn, knowing, as she did, that neither of them had a shilling. Of all men in the world she esteemed Mr. Kennedy the most, and when these thoughts were passing through her mind, she was well aware that he would ask her to be his wife. Had she not resolved that she would accept the offer, she would not have gone to Loughlinter. Having put aside all romance as unfitted to her life, she could, she thought, do her duty as Mr. Kennedy's wife. She would teach herself to love him. Nay,—she had taught herself to love him. She was at any rate so sure of her own heart that she would never give her husband cause to rue the confidence he placed in her. And yet there was something sore within her when she thought that Phineas Finn was becoming fond of Violet Effingham.

It was Lady Baldock's second evening, and Phineas came to the house at about eleven o'clock. At this time he had encountered a second and a third interview with Mr. Clarkson, and had already failed in obtaining any word of comfort from Laurence Fitzgibbon about the bill. It was clear enough now that Laurence felt that they were both made safe by their privilege, and that Mr. Clarkson should be treated as you treat the organ-grinders. They are a nuisance and must be endured. But the nuisance is not so great but what you can live in comfort,—if only you are not too sore as to the annoyance. "My dear fellow," Laurence had said to him, "I have had Clarkson almost living in my rooms. He used to drink nearly a pint of sherry a day for me. All I looked to was that I didn't live there at the same time. If you wish it, I'll send in the sherry." This was very bad, and Phineas tried to quarrel with his friend; but he found that it was difficult to quarrel with Laurence Fitzgibbon.

But though on this side Phineas was very miserable, on another side he had obtained great comfort. Mr. Monk and he were better friends than ever. "As to what Turnbull says about me in the House," Mr. Monk had said, laughing; "he and I understand each other perfectly. I should like to see you on your legs, but it is just as well, perhaps, that you have deferred it. We shall have the real question on immediately after Easter, and then you'll have plenty of opportunities." Phineas had explained how he had attempted, how he had failed, and how he had suffered;—and Mr. Monk had been generous in his sympathy. "I know all about it," said he, "and have gone through it all myself. The more respect you feel for the House, the more satisfaction you will have in addressing it when you have mastered this difficulty."

The first person who spoke to Phineas at Lady Baldock's was Miss Fitzgibbon, Laurence's sister. Aspasia Fitzgibbon was a warm woman as regarded money, and as she was moreover a most discreet spinster, she was made welcome by Lady Baldock, in spite of the well-known iniquities of her male relatives. "Mr. Finn," said she,

"how d'ye do? I want to say a word to ye. Just come here into the corner." Phineas, not knowing how to escape, did retreat into the corner with Miss Fitzgibbon. "Tell me now, Mr. Finn;—have ye been lending money to Larrence?"

"No; I have lent him no money," said Phineas, much astonished by the question.

"Don't. That's my advice to ye. Don't. On any other matter Larrence is the best creature in the world,—but he's bad to lend money to. You ain't in any hobble with him, then?"

"Well;—nothing to speak of. What makes you ask?"

"Then you are in a hobble? Dear, dear! I never saw such a man as Larrence;—never. Good-bye. I wouldn't do it again, if I were you;—that's all." Then Miss Fitzgibbon came out of the corner and made her way downstairs.

Phineas immediately afterwards came across Miss Effingham. "I did not know," said she, "that you and the divine Aspasia were such close allies."

"We are the dearest friends in the world, but she has taken my breath away now."

"May a body be told how she has done that?" Violet asked.

"Well, no; I'm afraid not, even though the body be Miss Effingham. It was a profound secret;—really a secret concerning a third person, and she began about it just as though she were speaking about the weather!"

"How charming! I do so like her. You haven't heard, have you, that Mr. Ratler proposed to her the other day."

"No!"

"But he did;—at least, so she tells everybody. She said she'd take him if he would promise to get her brother's salary doubled."

"Did she tell you?"

"No; not me. And of course I don't believe a word of it. I suppose Barrington Erle made up the story. Are you going out of town next week, Mr. Finn?" The week next to this was Easter-week. "I heard you were going into Northamptonshire."

"From Lady Laura?"

"Yes;—from Lady Laura."

"I intend to spend three days with Lord Chiltern at Willingford. It is an old promise. I am going to ride his horses,—that is, if I am able to ride them."

"Take care what you are about, Mr. Finn;—they say his horses are so dangerous!"

"I'm rather good at falling, I flatter myself."

"I know that Lord Chiltern rides anything he can sit, so long as it is some animal that nobody else will ride. It was always so with him. He is so odd; is he not?"

Phineas knew, of course, that Lord Chiltern had more than once

asked Violet Effingham to be his wife,—and he believed that she, from her intimacy with Lady Laura, must know that he knew it. He had also heard Lady Laura express a very strong wish that, in spite of these refusals, Violet might even yet become her brother's wife. And Phineas also knew that Violet Effingham was becoming, in his own estimation, the most charming woman of his acquaintance. How was he to talk to her about Lord Chiltern?

"He is odd," said Phineas; "but he is an excellent fellow,—whom his father altogether misunderstands."

"Exactly,—just so; I am so glad to hear you say that,—you who have never had the misfortune to have anything to do with a bad set. Why don't you tell Lord Brentford? Lord Brentford would listen to you."

"To me?"

"Yes;—of course he would,—for you are just the link that is wanting. You are Chiltern's intimate friend, and you are also the friend of big-wigs and Cabinet Ministers."

"Lord Brentford would put me down at once if I spoke to him on such a subject."

"I am sure he would not. You are too big to be put down, and no man can really dislike to hear his son well spoken of by those who are well spoken of themselves. Won't you try, Mr. Finn?" Phineas said that he would think of it,—that he would try if any fit opportunity could be found. "Of course you know how intimate I have been with the Standishes," said Violet; "that Laura is to me a sister, and that Oswald used to be almost a brother."

"Why do not you speak to Lord Brentford;—you, who are his favourite?"

"There are reasons, Mr. Finn. Besides, how can any girl come forward and say that she knows the disposition of any man? You can live with Lord Chiltern, and see what he is made of, and know his thoughts, and learn what is good in him, and also what is bad. After all, how is any girl really to know anything of a man's life?"

"If I can do anything, Miss Effingham, I will," said Phineas.

"And then we shall all of us be so grateful to you," said Violet, with her sweetest smile.

Phineas, retreating from this conversation, stood for a while alone, thinking of it. Had she spoken thus of Lord Chiltern because she did love him or because she did not? And the sweet commendations which had fallen from her lips upon him,—him, Phineas Finn,—were they compatible with anything like a growing partiality for himself, or were they incompatible with any such feeling? Had he most reason to be comforted or to be discomfited by what had taken place? It seemed hardly possible to his imagination that Violet Effingham should love such a nobody as he. And yet he had had fair evidence that one standing as high in the world as Violet Effing-

ham would fain have loved him could she have followed the dictates of her heart. He had trembled when he had first resolved to declare his passion to Lady Laura,—fearing that she would scorn him as being presumptuous. But there had been no cause for such fear as that. He had declared his love, and she had not thought him to be presumptuous. That now was ages ago,—eight months since; and Lady Laura had become a married woman. Since he had become so warmly alive to the charms of Violet Effingham he had determined, with stern propriety, that a passion for a married woman was disgraceful. Such love was in itself a sin, even though it was accompanied by the severest forbearance and the most rigid propriety of conduct. No;—Lady Laura had done wisely to check the growing feeling of partiality which she had admitted; and now that she was married, he would be as wise as she. It was clear to him that, as regarded his own heart, the way was open to him for a new enterprise. But what if he were to fail again, and be told by Violet, when he declared his love, that she had just engaged herself to Lord Chiltern!

"What were you and Violet talking about so eagerly?" said Lady Laura to him, with a smile that, in its approach to laughter, almost betrayed its mistress.

"We were talking about your brother."

"You are going to him, are you not?"

"Yes; I leave London on Sunday night;—but only for a day or two."

"Has he any chance there, do you think?"

"What, with Miss Effingham?"

"Yes;—with Violet. Sometimes I think she loves him."

"How can I say? In such a matter you can judge better than I can do. One woman with reference to another can draw the line between love and friendship. She certainly likes Lord Chiltern."

"Oh, I believe she loves him. I do indeed. But she fears him. She does not quite understand how much there is of tenderness with that assumed ferocity. And Oswald is so strange, so unwise, so impolitic, that though he loves her better than all the world beside, he will not sacrifice even a turn of a word to win her. When he asks her to marry him, he almost flies at her throat, as an angry debtor who applies for instant payment. Tell him, Mr. Finn, never to give it over;—and teach him that he should be soft with her. Tell him, also, that in her heart she likes him. One woman, as you say, knows another woman; and I am certain he would win her if he would only be gentle with her." Then again, before they parted, Lady Laura told him that this marriage was the dearest wish of her heart, and that there would be no end to her gratitude if Phineas could do anything to promote it. All which again made our hero unhappy.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SUNDAY IN GROSVENOR PLACE.

Mr. Kennedy, though he was a most scrupulously attentive member of Parliament, was a man very punctual to hours and rules in his own house,—and liked that his wife should be as punctual as himself. Lady Laura, who in marrying him had firmly resolved that she would do her duty to him in all ways, even though the ways might sometimes be painful,—and had been perhaps more punctilious in this respect than she might have been had she loved him heartily,—was not perhaps quite so fond of accurate regularity as her husband; and thus, by this time, certain habits of his had become rather bonds than habits to her. He always had prayers at nine, and breakfasted at a quarter past nine, let the hours on the night before have been as late as they might before the time for rest had come. After breakfast he would open his letters in his study, but he liked her to be with him, and desired to discuss with her every application he got from a constituent. He had his private secretary in a room apart, but he thought that everything should be filtered to his private secretary through his wife. He was very anxious that she herself should superintend the accounts of their own private expenditure, and had taken some trouble to teach her an excellent mode of book-keeping. He had recommended to her a certain course of reading,—which was pleasant enough; ladies like to receive such recommendations; but Mr. Kennedy, having drawn out the course, seemed to expect that his wife should read the books he had named, and, worse still, that she should read them in the time he had allocated for the work. This, I think, was tyranny. Then the Sundays became very wearisome to Lady Laura. Going to church twice, she had learnt, would be a part of her duty; and though in her father's household attendance at church had never been very strict, she had made up her mind to this cheerfully. But Mr. Kennedy expected also that he and she should always dine together on Sundays, that there should be no guests, and that there should be no evening company. After all, the demand was not very severe, but yet she found that it operated injuriously upon her comfort. The Sundays were very wearisome to her, and made her feel that her lord and master was—her lord and master. She made an effort or two to escape, but the efforts were all in vain. He never spoke a cross word to her. He never gave a stern command. But yet he had his way. "I won't say that reading a novel on a Sunday is a sin," he said; "but we must at any rate admit that it is a matter on which men disagree, that many of the best of men are against such occupation on Sunday, and that to abstain is to be on the safe side." So the novels were put away, and Sunday afternoon with the long evening became rather a stumbling-block to Lady Laura.

Those two hours, moreover, with her husband in the morning became very wearisome to her. At first she had declared that it would be her greatest ambition to help her husband in his work, and she had read all the letters from the MacNabs and MacFies, asking to be made gaugers and landing-waiters, with an assumed interest. But the work palled upon her very quickly. Her quick intellect discovered soon that there was nothing in it which she really did. It was all form and verbiage, and pretence at business. Her husband went through it all with the utmost patience, reading every word, giving orders as to every detail, and conscientiously doing that which he conceived he had undertaken to do. But Lady Laura wanted to meddle with high politics, to discuss reform bills, to assist in putting up Mr. This and in putting down my Lord That. Why should she waste her time in doing that which the lad in the next room, who was called a private secretary, could do as well?

Still she would obey. Let the task be as hard as it might, she would obey. If he counselled her to do this or that, she would follow his counsel,—because she owed him so much. If she had accepted the half of all his wealth without loving him, she owed him the more on that account. But she knew,—she could not but know,—that her intellect was brighter than his; and might it not be possible for her to lead him? Then she made efforts to lead her husband, and found that he was as stiff-necked as an ox. Mr. Kennedy was not, perhaps, a clever man; but he was a man who knew his own way, and who intended to keep it.

"I have got a headache, Robert," she said to him one Sunday after luncheon. "I think I will not go to church this afternoon."

"It is not serious, I hope."

"Oh dear no. Don't you know how one feels sometimes that one has got a head; and when that is the case one's armchair is the best place."

"I am not sure of that," said Mr. Kennedy.

"If I went to church I should not attend," said Lady Laura

"The fresh air would do you more good than anything else, and we could walk across the park."

"Thank you;—I won't go out again to-day." This she said with something almost of crossness in her manner, and Mr. Kennedy went to the afternoon service by himself.

Lady Laura when she was left alone began to think of her position. She was not more than four or five months married, and she was becoming very tired of her life. Was it not also true that she was becoming tired of her husband? She had twice told Phineas Finn that of all men in the world she esteemed Mr. Kennedy the most. She did not esteem him less now. She knew no point or particle in which he did not do his duty with accuracy. But no person can live happily with another,—not even with a brother or a sister or a friend,—simply upon esteem. All the virtues in the

calendar, though they exist on each side, will not make a man and woman happy together, unless there be sympathy. Lady Laura was beginning to find out that there was a lack of sympathy between herself and her husband.

She thought of this till she was tired of thinking of it, and then, wishing to divert her mind, she took up the book that was lying nearest to her hand. It was a volume of a new novel which she had been reading on the previous day, and now, without much thought about it, she went on with her reading. There came to her, no doubt, some dim, half-formed idea that, as she was freed from going to church by the plea of a headache, she was also absolved by the same plea from other Sunday hindrances. A child, when it is ill, has buttered toast and a picture-book instead of bread-and-milk and lessons. In this way, Lady Laura conceived herself to be entitled to her novel.

While she was reading it, there came a knock at the door, and Barrington Erle was shown upstairs. Mr. Kennedy had given no orders against Sunday visitors, but had simply said that Sunday visiting was not to his taste. Barrington, however, was Lady Laura's cousin, and people must be very strict if they can't see their cousins on Sunday. Lady Laura soon lost her headache altogether in the animation of discussing the chances of the new Reform Bill with the Prime Minister's private secretary; and had left her chair, and was standing by the table with the novel in her hand, protesting this and denying that, expressing infinite confidence in Mr. Monk, and violently denouncing Mr. Turnbull, when her husband returned from church and came up into the drawing-room. Lady Laura had forgotten her headache altogether, and had in her composition none of that thoughtfulness of hypocrisy which would have taught her to moderate her political feeling at her husband's return.

"I do declare," she said, "that if Mr. Turnbull opposes the Government measure now, because he can't have his own way in everything, I will never again put my trust in any man who calls himself a popular leader."

"You never should," said Barrington Erle.

"That's all very well for you, Barrington, who are an aristocratic Whig of the old official school, and who call yourself a Liberal simply because Fox was a Liberal a hundred years ago. My heart's in it."

"Heart should never have anything to do with politics; should it?" said Erle, turning round to Mr. Kennedy.

Mr. Kennedy did not wish to discus the matter on a Sunday, nor yet did he wish to say before Barrington Erle that he thought it wrong to do so. And he was desirous of treating his wife in some way as though she were an invalid,—that she thereby might be, as it were, punished; but he did not wish to do this in such a way that Barrington should be aware of the punishment.

"Laura had better not disturb herself about it now," he said.

"How is a person to help being disturbed?" said Lady Laura, laughing.

"Well, well; we won't mind all that now," said Mr. Kennedy, turning away. Then he took up the novel which Lady Laura had just laid down from her hand, and, having looked at it, carried it aside, and placed it on a book-shelf which was remote from them. Lady Laura watched him as he did this, and the whole course of her husband's thoughts on the subject was open to her at once. She regretted the novel, and she regretted also the political discussion. Soon afterwards Barrington Erle went away, and the husband and wife were alone together.

"I am glad that your head is so much better," said he. He did not intend to be severe, but he spoke with a gravity of manner which almost amounted to severity.

"Yes; it is," she said. "Barrington's coming in cheered me up."

"I am sorry that you should have wanted cheering."

"Don't you know what I mean, Robert?"

"No; I do not think that I do, exactly."

"I suppose your head is stronger. You do not get that feeling of dazed, helpless imbecility of brain, which hardly amounts to headache, but which yet—is almost as bad."

"Imbecility of brain may be worse than headache, but I don't think it can produce it."

"Well, well;—I don't know how to explain it."

"Headache comes, I think, always from the stomach, even when produced originally by nervous affections. But imbecility of the brain—"

"Oh, Robert, I am so sorry that I used the word."

"I see that it did not prevent your reading," he said, after a pause.

"Not such reading as that. I was up to nothing better."

Then there was another pause.

"I won't deny that it may be a prejudice," he said, "but I confess that the use of novels in my own house on Sundays is a pain to me. My mother's ideas on the subject are very strict, and I cannot think that it is bad for a son to hang on to the teaching of his mother." This he said in the most serious tone which he could command.

"I don't know why I took it up," said Lady Laura. "Simply, I believe, because it was there. I will avoid doing so for the future."

"Do, my dear," said the husband. "I shall be obliged and grateful if you will remember what I have said." Then he left her, and she sat alone, first in the dusk and then in the dark, for two hours, doing nothing. Was this to be the life which she had procured for herself by marrying Mr. Kennedy of Loughlinter? If it was harsh and unendurable in London, what would it be in the country?

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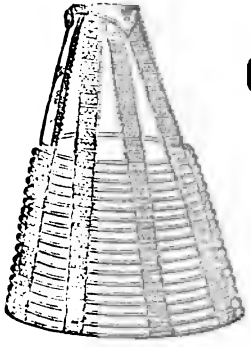

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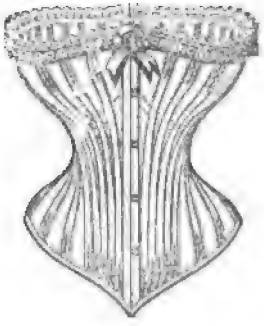

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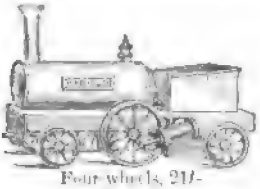

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